

Music & Letters

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Rameau and Rousseau Eve Kisch	97
Hours with Domenico Scarlatti Kathleen Dale	115
Problems of Modern Harmonic Evolution . Mosco Carner	123
The Eastern Modal Influence Dennis Stoll	135
A Best-Seller in Opera Edward J. Dent	139
George W. Holt Editorial	154
Kodály and the Christian Epic W. H. Mellers	155
The Minuet-Trio Eric Blom	162
Register of Books on Music	181
Reviews of Books	184
Correspondence	197

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Hours with Domenico Scarlatti	Kathleen Dale 115
Problems of Modern Harmonic Evolution	Mosco Carner 123
The Eastern Modal Influence	Dennis Stoll 135
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Music and Letters

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Volume XXII

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RAMEAU AND ROUSSEAU⁽¹⁾

BY EVE KISCH

JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU spent the last ten years of his life in desperately fighting a losing battle. The Lulliste opposition, now finally crushed, had been puny compared with this new attack, which was led by some of the foremost generals in the whole history of paper polemics. Unfortunately for Rameau, the sharpest quills were ranged against him: to this day many a one "speaks poniards, and every word stabs".

For some time he kept out of the fray with Olympian aloofness, and this is reflected in the quantity of his musical compositions. Although he was seventy, he managed to produce three stage works in 1753, and two single-act ones followed in 1754. However, when Jean-Jacques Rousseau began to address lectures on harmony to him, he at last lost patience, and in 1755 started a counter-attack of pamphlets. But neither the weapon nor the time was of his own choosing, and it is small wonder that in his seventies he fell before his formidable opponents. The battle undoubtedly wore him out: in the last ten years of his life he wrote only three musical works. These were his second 'Anacréon', a one-act ballet with words by Bernard, followed by 'Les Paladins' in three acts, his only comic opera apart from 'Platée', and lastly his fifth lyric tragedy, 'Les Boréades' in five acts—unpublished and unperformed at his death in 1764.

The leading spirit among Rameau's enemies at this time was Rousseau. There were many others, but they were not as dangerous, inasmuch as they expressed themselves far less cleverly and were moreover restrained by the average man's reluctance to

⁽¹⁾ A chapter from a book on Rameau just completed by the author.

be wildly inconsistent with himself. Rousseau had no such scruples : he combined an uncannily quick intellect and instinctive good taste with a passion for shocking his public and supreme confidence in the power of his rhetoric to do so. In music he made his judgments fit with his *a priori* theories, and any fact that appeared not to square with these he Jesuitically swept aside, even if he had previously admitted it. Had he been only a very little less clever, his unscrupulous sophistries, together with the great gaps in his musical education, would have made him a laughing-stock instead of a highly respected critic. If Rameau was the eighteenth century's Wagner, Rousseau was certainly its Bernard Shaw—only in his musical views he stood on the opposite side of the fence. But this was only a chance freak of history : had Wagner been outworn and Italian music new to England in 1890, we may be sure that "Corno di Bassetto" would have shared the views, as he did the methods, of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Rousseau's professional musical activity never went very far. But it is interesting that, in his early years as a music-teacher in Lausanne, Neuchâtel and Chambéry, he attempted to instruct his pupils in the principles of Rameau's 'Traité de l'harmonie'. Later too, when his system of musical notation was rejected by the Paris Académie as being "neither new nor useful", he appreciated Rameau's disinterested criticism, in spite of a constitutional unwillingness to admit defeat : "The one solid objection that could be made to my system was made by Rameau. As soon as I explained it to him he saw its weak side."

This was in 1742, when Rousseau was just thirty ; but, on his return from Venice two years later, Book VII of the 'Confessions' already shows the beginning of his deadly if somewhat ridiculous jealousy of the sexagenarian composer. Before leaving Paris he had composed a three-act "heroic ballet", 'Les Muses galantes', and on returning he hoped, like many another aspiring young musician, to find a backer in La Poupelinière. But in the seventeen-forties, as he expressed it, "Rameau faisoit, comme on dit, la pluie et le beau temps dans cette maison" ; and it was to Rameau's cold brutality that he attributed his failure to impress the La Poupelinière household. A few years later he complains that the same clique used every means to obstruct the revised edition of Voltaire and Rameau's 'Princesse de Navarre', commissioned from him by the Duc de Richelieu. And by the end of the seventeen-forties, when he had had to relinquish the project of producing 'Les Muses galantes' at the Opéra, he became, for purely personal reasons, an avowed enemy of Rameau and his admiring circle.

Nevertheless he had as yet nothing to say against the older composer's style of music. Witness his 'Lettre sur le drame musical en France et en Italie', addressed to Grimm in 1750. This letter, first published by Jansen in 1884, contradicts in almost every particular the opinions which its author was to advance so categorically only two years later. Its critical comparison between French and Italian opera shows a bias considerably beyond that in favour of the French in Raguene's 'Parallèle des Italiens et des François' (1702)—a bias justified by musical developments in each country during the intervening half-century. Boldly Rousseau declares :

La musique italienne me plaît souverainement, mais elle ne me touche point. La française ne me plaît que parce qu'elle me touche. Les fredons, les passages, les traits, les roulements de la première font briller l'organe et charment l'oreille, mais les sons séduisants de la seconde vont droit au cœur. Si la musique est faite pour plaire seulement, donnons la palme à l'Italie, mais si elle doit encore émouvoir, tenons-nous-en à la nôtre, surtout quand il est question de l'opéra. . . .

He complains too, as Raguene had done, of the monotony of Italian arias, all cut on precisely the same plan and invariably sandwiched between the dry bread of *recitativo secco*, unrelieved by the barred recitatives, short airs and dialogues, and excellent choruses of French opera. "The few choruses there are in Italian opera are sung only by the principals and are not worthy of the name."

Again he justly criticizes the Italians' instrumentation and harmony; and, though he gives their violinists credit for excellent rhythm and intonation, he deplores the absence of flutes, oboes, bassoons and cellos from their orchestras. And he has nothing to say for the double-basses :

. . . une demie-douzaine de contrebasses qui certainement servent plus à battre le mesure qu'à flatter l'oreille. Aussi le beau chant et la mélodie qu'ils mettent dans les parties principales, sont-ils les seuls mérites de leurs compositions, car pour l'harmonie il y en a plus à mon avis dans les seules Indes Galantes [de Rameau] que dans tous les opéras italiens mis ensemble.

In February 1752 Friedrich Melchior Grimm published his 'Lettre sur Omphale'. Not yet thirty, he had been in Paris for about three years when he wrote this brochure, destined to become famous in the light of future events. 'Omphale', a lyric tragedy by Destouches, had had its first performance at the Opéra in 1701, and had since enjoyed four revivals, of which the last took place on January 14th 1752. Its prologue and five acts moved rather heavily

in the classic French manner : neither new nor revolutionary in style, it would seem to be an indifferent subject for a polemical pamphlet. But it was its very lack of distinction which made it an apt starting-point for Grimm's panegyric on Italian opera at French opera's expense. Not that he is at all fanatical in the 'Lettre' : on the contrary, he allows certain merits to the French composers, and is positively complimentary to Rameau. 'Pygmalion' is "divine", and 'Platée' "ouvrage sublime"; in recitative "Je trouve M. Rameau très grand souvent, et toujours original . . . il n'appartient peut-être qu'à Rameau de donner de la physionomie à tout ce qu'il peint."

Grimm's 'Lettre' provoked a twenty-eight-page apologia for Rameau and French music, in the anonymous 'Remarques au sujet de la lettre de M. Grimm sur Omphale'. This has been almost indubitably established as the work of the Abbé Raynal, whom Grimm was to succeed in 1753 as editor of the 'Correspondance littéraire'. At all events Grimm⁽²⁾ addressed to Raynal his brief 'Lettre sur les remarques au sujet de sa lettre sur Omphale' in the tone of one who had half-pierced its anonymity : actually it adds little of relevant interest, apart from Grimm's reasons for preferring Pergolesi to Handel. Far more important was Rousseau's anonymous counter-attack on the 'Remarques', published that same April in the form of a twenty-nine-page letter to Grimm.⁽³⁾ Here we see signs of a *volte-face* in Rousseau's attitude towards Rameau's operatic music. He admits that Rameau has given to French opera a grandeur, colour and variety unknown to Lully and his feeble imitators : "Il a franchi hardiment le petit cercle de très-petite musique autour duquel nos petits musiciens tournoient sans cesse depuis la mort du grand Lulli"; at the same time he voices the time-honoured complaint of the composer's noisiness and complexity : "One would have so much pleasure in hearing his operas if they were a little less deafening." Rameau's elaborate counter-point is, according to Rousseau, as superfluous to opera as three or four simultaneous plots to a comedy.

Toutes ces belles finesses de l'art, ces imitations, ces doubles dessins, ces basses contraintes, ces contrefugues, ne sont que des monstres difformes, des monuments du mauvais goût, qu'il faut reléguer dans les cloîtres comme dans leur dernier asile.

A simple recitative is advocated, to be followed by an unexpected *coup d'archet* from the strings which "wakes up the most absent-

⁽¹⁾ On April and 1752, published in the May 'Mercure'.

⁽²⁾ Its full title was 'Lettre à M. Grimm au sujet des remarques ajoutées à sa lettre sur Omphale'.

mindful spectator and compels him to be attentive". This reflects the taste of Italian audiences, who were accustomed to eat ices throughout the performance, until they gathered from the *coup d'archet's* warning note that they were due for a grand aria. It is hardly surprising that they, and Rousseau with them, felt the French melodious recitatives, with their closely-connected airs, to be entirely confused and tuneless.

Rousseau goes so far as to say: "I defy anyone to tell me the precise point of difference between what the French call recitative and what they call air." Then, returning to Rameau, he delivers a final condemnation in a paean of false praise:

We must recognize in M. Rameau a very great talent, much fire, a sound head, a great knowledge of harmonic inversions and all the machinery of effect; plenty of art in appropriating other people's ideas and transforming, adorning and embellishing them: clever rather than creative, he has more learning than genius, or at any rate his genius is stifled by excess of learning; but he has always strength of style, and very often fine melody also. . . . No one has grasped the spirit of detail better than he, but no one has been more powerless to impart the craftsman's ideal unity to his operas: he is perhaps the one man in the world who has been unable to make a good work out of a number of fine pieces excellently arranged.

After this preliminary skirmish the three pamphleteers met at a dinner of reconciliation, probably on May 8th 1752, and there for some months the affair rested. But at the beginning of August far more serious hostilities began. It was then that a visiting troupe of nine Italian *burletta* singers started a musical controversy which was to rack Paris for the rest of the century. Known in the fifties as the *guerre des bouffons*, it afterwards developed, with no loss of intensity, into the Gluck-Piccinni feud. The Italian "buffoons" began their season with Pergolesi's 'La serva padrona', and they stayed, with their repertory of a dozen comic operas, for a year and a half; but, as a direct result of their activities, sixty-three critical—or rather for the most part uncritical—publications on music appeared in Paris during four years. Of these publications at least thirty were provoked by that supreme controversialist Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The eighth book of Rousseau's *Confessions* tells us that

The *bouffons* acquired for Italian music very warm partisans. All Paris was divided into two parties, the violence of which was greater than if an affair of state or religion had been in question. One of them, the more powerful and numerous, composed of the rich, the great and the ladies, supported French music; the other, more lively and arrogant, and fuller of enthusiasm, was composed of real connoisseurs, and men of talent and genius. This little group assembled at the Opera House, under the box belonging to the queen. The

other party filled up the rest of the pit of the theatre ; but the heads were mostly assembled under the box of His Majesty. Hence the party names of "Coin du Roi" and "Coin de la Reine", then in great celebrity. The dispute, as it became more animated, produced several pamphlets. The king's corner aimed at pleasantry ; it was laughed at by the 'Petit Prophète'. It attempted to reason ; the 'Lettre sur la musique française' refuted its reasoning. These two little productions, the former of which was by Grimm, the latter by myself, are the only ones which have outlived the quarrel ; all the rest are long since forgotten.

Grimm for his part writes in the 'Correspondance littéraire' :

Les acteurs italiens ont tellement absorbé l'attention de Paris que le parlement, malgré toutes ses démarches et procédures, qui devaient lui donner de la célébrité, ne pouvait pas manquer de tomber dans un oubli entier.

To which Rousseau adds that his 'Lettre sur la musique française' "probably prevented a revolution".

It is annoying but true that those two insufferably clever young men, Rousseau and Grimm, did not greatly overestimate the contemporary importance of their musical pamphleteering ; however, before examining the publications themselves, it is of interest to see what political implications lay behind the party-titles of "King's Corner" and "Queen's Corner". Madame de Pompadour was a known partisan of French music—she had had Rameau's 'Les Surprises de l'Amour' performed at Versailles, nine years before its appearance at the Académie ; therefore the "Queen's Corner" had perforce to favour the Italian cause. Grimm writes with studied irony : "Le patriotisme se réveilla. Mme de Pompadour crut la musique française en danger et frémit." For at her request Mondonville's 'Titon et Aurore' was produced with great splendour at the Opéra on January 9th 1753, and the great ballerina Camargo, who had just retired at the height of her popularity, reappeared for the occasion. That night Grimm and his friends wished to wear mourning for the *bouffons*, but the party-leaders vetoed this, he says, "de peur que tout le convoi funèbre ne fût prié d'aller achever les obsèques à la paroisse de la Bastille".

Grimm accordingly vented his feelings on paper, in the famous pamphlet 'Le Petit Prophète de Boemisch-Broda', which appeared anonymously in February. In mock-biblical language it pretends to describe the impressions of a Bohemian musician on being transported by magic to the opera-house at Paris :

... And I saw a man that held a rod, and it seemed that he would chastise the bad violins, for I heard many there that were goodly and others that were not so. And he made the sound of one

that breaketh wood, and I stood astonished that his shoulder-bone was not out of joint, and I marvelled at the might of his arm. . . . And I saw that this was named Beating Time, and howsoever hardly it was beaten, yet were the musicians never together. . . . And there came an elder whom the woman with the stick named a youth (for the Prophet had said it was so) albeit he was past three score years. And he choked in his throat before them all, feigning that he sang. . . . And I saw those that danced and leaped without number and without end, and this they named a festival, yet it was not so, for there was no joy : it ended not at all, and methought they tired not of leaping, howbeit they seemed sore wearied, and wearisome likewise to me and to the rest. . . .

The 'Petit Prophète' then remarks that these dancers were continually interrupting the actors and ousting them from their rightful place on the stage, so that they only emerged intermittently from their corners, said their say, and withdrew again. He sums up thus :

For two and a half hours I was wearied by a collection of minuets, gavottes, rigaudons, tambourins and contredanses, interspersed with some scenes of plainsong that seemed to come straight from the evening service. I noted that in France this was called Opera.

The 'Petit Prophète' met with innumerable counterblasts, but none as yet from Rameau. Voltaire too remained aloof, declaring that opera ought by rights to be a source of pleasure. Diderot, in the words of Louisette Reichenburg, "prêchait la conciliation et l'emploi du bon sens dans la querelle. Il n'écrivit pas moins de trois brochures dans ce ton quelque peu affecté de conciliateur impartial." All three brochures were anonymous.

Rousseau meanwhile was not idle in the pamphlet world ; but first he attempted once more to shine as a composer. In the spring of 1752, some months before the *bouffons* arrived, he had completed 'Le Devin du village', a one-act pastoral *intermède* with music in the melodious Italian style. On October 18th it was performed before Louis XV at Fontainebleau, and the Marquise de Pompadour not only paid the composer fifty louis for it, but herself took the "principal boy" part of Colin. On March 1st 1753 it appeared at the Opéra, the only one of Rousseau's works ever to do so, in spite of all his frantic efforts. Its career there was surprisingly successful, apart from its untoward ending. Duni remarks : "M. Rousseau a fait le Devin du Village : il n'y a jamais eu d'inconséquence si aimable." Diderot devoted to its praises a considerable part of his third *bouffoniste* pamphlet, the 'Vision de la nuit du Mardi-Gras au mercredi des Cendres'. In this three-chapter sequel to Grimm's 'Petit Prophète' (like most sequels it is comparatively

dull), the Bohemian musician is wafted, much against his will, on a second visit to the Opéra. Witnessing a performance of the 'Devin du village', he finds, to his surprise, that its recitatives are easily distinguishable from its airs; he admires too the instrumental writing, and notes that "le musicien savait faire des accompagnements et non du bruit".

After twenty years the work still holds the stage, and we find Gluck writing to the 'Mercure' in 1773:

L'accent de la nature est la langue universelle: M. Rousseau l'a employé avec le plus grand succès dans le genre simple. Son 'Devin du village' est un modèle qu'aucun auteur n'a encore imité.

But half a century later saw its downfall, after four hundred performances over seventy-five years. The simple platitude of its harmony, moving in unashamed sequences of parallel thirds and sixths, had had their day at a time when music's avowed aim was simply to give pleasure. Post-Revolution France had musical ideas beyond the *style de perruque*, and in 1829 the 'Devin' ended its career at the Opéra by a large powdered wig's being thrown from the auditorium on to the stage. Berlioz was accused of this characteristic prank—unjustly he says, although one inclines to suspect him. On the whole subject of Rousseau and Rameau his 'Mémoires' are well worth quoting:

Pauvre Rousseau, qui attachait autant d'importance à sa partition du 'Devin du village' qu'aux chefs-d'œuvre d'éloquence qui ont immortalisé son nom, lui qui croyait fermement avoir écrasé Rameau tout entier, voire le trio des Parques, avec les petites chansons, les petits flons-flons, les petits rondeaux, les petits solos, les petites bergeries, les petites drôleries de toute espèce dont se compose son petit intermède . . . pauvre Rousseau! Pouvait-il prévoir que son cher opéra, qui excita tant d'applaudissements, tomberait un jour pour ne plus se relever, sous le coup d'une énorme perruque poudrée à blanc, jetée aux pieds de Colette par un insolent railleur?

From its overture à l'*italienne*, described by Cucuel as "de la plus rare insignifiance", to its final aria *da capo*, the 'Devin du village' is like a French doll in Italian costume; and all its gay and excessively unpretentious little tunes seem to voice a protest against the seriousness underlying Rameau's music. Only in one respect do they fall short of Rousseau's rationalist theories: the words are repeated again and again *ad nauseam*, with all the banality of which the operatic convention is capable.

The 'Petit Prophète' continued to have its repercussions. In

the summer of 1753 Caffarelli, the famous *castrato*,⁽⁴⁾ in turn wrote his "dream" about the French opera, declaring: "They are going to say a plainsong miserere: by all the principles of art and taste it cannot be an overture." Early in the following year he quarrelled at dinner in La Poupelinière's house with the poet Ballot, an ardent Ramiste; and after the ensuing duel Ballot left with a wound that nearly proved fatal. As for Rameau himself, already before the end of 1753 he had finally broken with La Poupelinière, who with his amateur's enthusiasm and lack of discrimination had now become fanatically pro-Italian.

In the autumn of 1753 Rousseau threw himself into the *bouffons*' paper war. On September 23rd the performance of Jommelli's 'Il Paratogio' had failed, and Rousseau, in his anonymous 'Lettre d'un Symphoniste de l'Académie Royale de Musique à ses camarades de l'orchestre', accused the Opéra orchestra of playing well at rehearsals, and then intentionally ruining the performance out of a spiteful desire to see the last of the *bouffons*:

Enfin, mes chers camarades, nous triomphons; les bouffons sont renvoyés: nous allons briller de nouveau dans les symphonies de M. de Lulli; nous n'aurons plus si chaud à l'Opéra, ni tant de fatigue à l'orchestre.

In November Rousseau followed up this semi-facetious publication with his notorious 'Lettre sur la musique française', which was felt to be an outrage on every cultivated Parisian. The free pass to the Opéra which the composer of 'Le Devin du village' had enjoyed was at once confiscated, and only recovered twenty years later through the good offices of Gluck. Rousseau's effigy was publicly burnt at the Opéra door, and he himself declares, with typical egotism, that the orchestra's plot of murder was foiled only through the presence of a plain-clothes bodyguard, supplied without his knowledge by a friendly officer of the Mousquetaires.

The 'Lettre' is curiously Shavian, both in its dogmatical heterodoxy and in its forceful clarity of expression, of a kind that sweeps the reader straight into one camp or the other. Dr. Burney wrote on its behalf: "There was too much good sense, taste and reason in this letter for it to be read with indifference: it was abused but never answered." In eloquence, at any rate, it was unanswerable, however dubious were the sentiments it expressed. Rousseau's contention is that the source of all music, comprising harmony,

⁽⁴⁾ Burney tells us: "Caffarelli was this year sent for express from Naples by Marshal Richelieu, to gratify the curiosity of the Dauphiness, who had expressed a wish to hear him."

melody and rhythm, is directly traceable to language. French music accordingly suffers fatally from the language's silent and nasal syllables, and vowels of mixed quality. These not only ruin the tone of a slow passage, but make the speed of a quick one "like that of a hard angular body rolling over cobble-stones". French composers accordingly make up for this absence of vocal grace by a forced intricacy :

Pour ôter l'insipidité ils augmenteroient la confusion ; ils croiroient faire de la musique et ils ne feroient que du bruit . . . comme ces écritures gothiques, dont les lignes, remplies de traits et de lettres figurées, ne contiennent que deux ou trois mots, et qui renferment très peu de sens en un grand espace.

In the same strain, all contrapuntal devices are condemned as

des restes de barbarie et de mauvais goût, qui ne subsistent, comme les portails de nos églises gothiques, que pour la honte de ceux qui ont eu la patience de les faire.

Italian music is congratulated on having emerged from the polyphonic state of *voces praetereaue nihil*, in which France still flounders, with her thick harmony and fantastic instrumentation :

De faire chanter à part des violons d'un côté, de l'autre des flûtes, de l'autre des bassons, chacun sur un dessein particulier, et d'appeler tout ce chaos de la musique, c'est insulter également l'oreille et le jugement des auditeurs.

Finally, in a sweeping peroration, French music is dismissed for ever :

I think I have made it clear that there is neither time nor tune in French music, because the language does not admit of it : that French singing is one long bark, intolerable to an unforewarned ear ; that its harmony is crude, expressionless and redolent of academic exercises ; and that French airs are not airs at all, nor is French recitative recitative. Whence I conclude that the French have no music and never can have ; or, if they ever have any, it will be the worse for them.

The 'Lettre sur la musique française' was a palpable hit at Rameau and all that his music represented ; nevertheless, when the *bouffons* departed in March 1754, there was a successful revival not only of 'Castor et Pollux', but also of 'Platée', a rival to *opera buffa* on its own ground. Before 'Platée', the French type of comic opera had been the *comédie-vaudeville*, an entertainment in which new words were given to traditional tunes, somewhat after the style of the English 'Beggar's Opera'. The old French *comédie-vaudeville*, however, had none of the neatness and realism of Gay's plot, but was naively incoherent, witness 'L'Endriague' by Piron, the first stage

work in which Rameau participated.⁽¹⁾ Boissy's 'L'Apologie du siècle' gives us some idea of the average vaudeville's standard of sense :

LE VAUDEVILLE :

Je suis, ma belle Reine,
Flon, flon, larira dondaine,
Un dieu plaisant et gai, gai
Larira dondé.
Soumis à votre Empire
Ta la ra ri ta la ra rire.

LA CRITIQUE :

À ce langage, à ces refrains
Je reconnois le Vaudeville,
Qui fait les plaisirs de la Ville ;
Et l'âme de tous les festins.

And, eight years after the advent of the *bouffons*, Favart's 'Le Procès des ariettes et des vaudevilles' gives an entertaining comparison between the traditional form of song and the comparatively new *ariette*, i.e. aria with *da capo* :

C'est la troupe des ariettes,
Allant par sauts et par courbettes,
Chantant sans cesse A a, O o :
C'est l'éternelle
Ritournelle
Qui vient toujours sans qu'on l'appelle ;
C'est le Duo,
C'est le Trio,
Le Quatuor ou le Quinto
Avec les Piano, les Presto
Echappés de cent concertos,
En un mot toute la suite
De cette musique nouvelle
Qu'en France la mode introduit
Pour ne produire que du bruit.

Various Ariettes are then personally introduced as characters :

Celle qui se promène avec une queue traînante et les mains dans les poches, parce qu'elle ne sçait qu'en faire . . . c'est la *Ritournelle*.

Et celui-ci qui porte un chapeau fait en arcade, c'est le *Point d'orgue*.

Cet autre qui se tient là tout seul, c'est le *Monosyllabe*, Ah, ah, ou bien *Quoi, Hein ?* C'est lui qui vient au secours du musicien quand il est embarrassé.

Ces deux autres qui tournent le dos, c'est le *Duo contradictoire*
Et oui, et non, et si, et mais, non, non, non, non, si, si, si, si.

⁽¹⁾ A "three-act comic opera interspersed with dances, divertissements and grand airs"; the book was by a fellow-Dijonnais, Alexis Piron, who afterwards wrote: "Rameau, alors très ignoré, composa pour l'amour de moi la musique de ce morceau".

Favart himself preferred the old-fashioned *comédie-vaudeville* to *opéra buffa*; however, he advised a reconciliation between them. In one of his *revues* a composer, Cliquette, holds up two weights, with the words: "De ce côté c'est de la musique française, un peu lourde à la vérité; de l'autre, de la musique italienne, fort légère mais bien chargée de notes; cela fait l'équilibre."

That Rameau too favoured a compromise in the realm of comedy can be seen in 'Platée', where Italian dramatic naturalism is combined with a French sense of harmony, orchestration and *mise-en-scène*. We have also his own words: "Il faut écouter souvent de la musique de tous les goûts . . . embrasser un goût national plutôt qu'un autre, c'est prouver qu'on est encore bien novice dans l'art."

Rameau's 'Observations sur notre instinct pour la musique', published in 1754,⁽⁴⁾ zealously defends Lully's recitative against the attacks of the 'Lettre sur la musique française'; and its preface draws attention for the first time to a very obvious flaw in Rousseau's argument, namely the unjustifiable comparison between the methods of Italian comedy and those of French tragedy. Unlike Rousseau, Rameau makes his points in an impersonal and academic way: as yet he can hardly be said to be embroiled in the controversy:

Si l'imitation des bruits et des mouvemens n'est pas aussi fréquemment employée dans notre musique que dans l'Italienne, c'est que l'objet dominant de la nôtre est le sentiment, qui n'a point de mouvemens déterminés . . . l'expression du Physique est dans la mesure et le mouvement, celle du Pathétique, au contraire, est dans l'harmonie et les inflexions. . . . Le genre Comique n'ayant presque jamais le sentiment pour objet, il est par conséquent le seul qui soit constamment susceptible de ces mouvemens cadencés dont on fait honneur à la musique Italienne, sans s'apercevoir cependant que nos Musiciens les ont assez heureusement employés dans le petit nombre d'Essais que la délicatesse du goût François leur a permis de risquer.

But he was unable much longer to maintain such a detached frame of mind. In 1752 d'Alembert had published a popular edition of the 'Traité de l'harmonie', entitled 'Elémens de musique théorique et pratique suivant les principes de M. Rameau'; and in May the composer wrote a grateful letter of acknowledgment to the 'Mercure'. It must then have been a bitter disappointment when Diderot and d'Alembert compiled their great 'Encyclopédie' (from 1751 to 1757) and commissioned the musical articles not from

⁽⁴⁾ In this work, as in the 'Code de musique pratique' (1760), Rameau gives a harmonic analysis of Armide's famous monologue, "Enfin il est en ma puissance", with the greatest detail and the greatest approval.

the learned Rameau, but from that unreliable and half-educated musician, their old friend Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Reading these extremely personal articles, compared with which Johnson's 'Dictionary' is a paragon of impartiality, one is hardly surprised at the sharp criticism of them contained in Rameau's 'Erreurs sur la musique dans l'Encyclopédie', published in 1755. This was countered by d'Alembert in a positively insulting preface to the Encyclopédie's sixth volume, which declared :

M. Rousseau, who has not only great musical knowledge and taste but also (unlike many musicians) the gift of clear thought and expression, is in such a good position to conduct his own defence that we need not here take up his cause. In the 'Dictionary of Music' which he is preparing he will be able to refute the attacks to which he has been submitted, if—as we are by no means certain—he decides that the anonymous brochure merits that attention.

Rousseau's 'Dictionnaire de Musique', completed in 1764 and published three years later, consists in the main of his 'Encyclopédie' articles, with a few additions. They sink to the utmost depths of prejudice, but at other times they show the same surprising flashes of good sense as are to be found elsewhere in his work. Percy Scholes sees in 'Émile ou de l'éducation' an anticipation of the Curwen system, and the following passages from the 'Dictionnaire' (art. 'Opéra' and 'Imitation') sound to us as modern as Debussy :

C'est un des grands avantages du musicien de pouvoir peindre les choses qu'on ne sauroit entendre, tandis qu'il est impossible au peintre de peindre celles qu'on ne sauroit voir. . . . Le sommeil, le calme de la nuit, la solitude et le silence même, entrent dans le nombre des tableaux de la musique : quelquefois le bruit produit l'effet du silence, et le silence l'effet du bruit. . . . Que toute la nature soit endormie, celui qui la contemple ne dort pas ; et l'art du musicien consiste à substituer à l'image insensible de l'objet celle des mouvemens que sa présence excite dans l'esprit du spectateur ; il ne représente pas directement la chose ; mais il réveille dans notre âme le même sentiment qu'on éprouve en la voyant.

An even more perfect definition of impressionism is in a letter to d'Alembert, dated June 26th 1754 :

L'art du musicien ne consiste point à peindre immédiatement les objets, mais à mettre l'ame dans une disposition semblable à celle où la mettrait leur présence.

And again :

La symphonie même a appris à parler sans le secours des paroles, et souvent il ne sort pas des sentiments moins vifs de l'orchestre que de la bouche des acteurs.

Rousseau was undoubtedly able to appreciate orchestral playing, in the case of other instruments beside his favourite Italian violin. Else he would not have written on the score of one of his motets: "Je voudrais bien qu'on eût la bonté de ne pas mettre là des hautbois malgré moi, quand ce sont des flutes que j'y veux." He characteristically dared to experiment with writing for the clarinet, although he confesses (on the manuscript of an Air for two clarinets) to an uncertainty of the instrument's compass. Again, Tiersot points out the very advanced pastoral dialogue between oboe, clarinet and bassoon in the overture to an unfinished opera, 'Daphnis et Chloé'; and wind instruments, together with drums in G and D, are well managed in two 'Airs pour être joués par la troupe marchante'. Of these the first is for drums and one fife, and the second for oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon—and Rousseau has added on the manuscript: "No piccolos, because they are never in tune." The same fastidious ear leads him (art. 'Fanfare') to admire German brass-playing, and to deplore that "In the whole kingdom of France there is not a single trumpet that sounds in tune, and the most warlike nation in Europe has the most discordant military instruments".

His critical faculty is perhaps at its best in the article 'Copiste', a profession of which he had had personal experience: "Quand on copie un récitatif obligé, il faut pour chaque partie d'instrument ajouter la partie du chant à la sienne pour la guider au défaut de la mesure." Again, in the article 'Voix', he very properly criticizes the practice of giving three out of the four parts of a chorus to men, seeing that women's voices have the same length of range.

He voices a widespread opinion⁽⁷⁾ in his criticism of the Opéra's conductor (art. 'Orchestre'), and "le bruit insupportable de son bâton qui couvre et amortit tout l'effet de la symphonie". In his definition of Divertissements as "Certain collections of dances and songs which it is the rule in Paris to insert in each act of an opera, ballet or tragedy . . . to break the action at some interesting moment", he implies the same complaint as that of Grimm.⁽⁸⁾ It is typical of all the admirers of Italian "operatic opera": "L'opéra français est un spectacle où tout le bonheur et tout le malheur des personnages consiste à voir danser autour d'eux."

Side by side with these statements, all of which contain an element of reason, we find in the 'Dictionnaire' such irresponsible remarks as the following: "There is not one harmony so agreeable

⁽⁷⁾ See for instance the 'Petit Prophète' and, half a century earlier, the English translator of Ragueneau's 'Parallèle'.

⁽⁸⁾ See the 'Petit Prophète'.

as a song in unison, and if we need to have chords it is because our taste is depraved." And (art. 'Mélodie') :

Immediately two melodies are heard at the same time they cancel each other out and make no effect at all, however beautiful each one may be alone. Judge then with what taste the French composers have introduced at their Opéra the habit of making one air accompany another or a chorus : one might as well declaim two speeches at once in order to make their eloquence more forceful.

Well might Schumann exclaim : "Melody ! the amateur's war-cry !", and Laloy remark drily : "Pour le citoyen de Genève, toute musique qu'il ne saurait écrire lui-même est gothique."

Rousseau dared to make an even more obvious thrust at Rameau in his article 'Récitatif obligé', which declared that such a thing did not exist in French opera until "an attempt was made to give some idea of it in the 'Devin du village'." As regards the orchestra, he pointedly remarks that in the number and intelligence of its players the finest in Europe is at Naples. Actually, the San Carlo Theatre at Naples numbered fifty-five players in its orchestra in 1740 : of these thirty were violins, yet there were no flutes at all ; in the days of Corelli, Vivaldi and Sammartini Italian opera was astonishingly poor in the variety of its instruments. However, this would make little difference to Rousseau, for whom the violin "suffit au grand compositeur pour en tirer tous les effets que les mauvais musiciens cherchent inutilement dans l'alliage d'une multitude d'instruments divers".⁽⁹⁾ The same passion for an easily-grasped melody, differentiated as sharply as possible from its "accompaniment", underlies the 'Dictionnaire's' criticism of the Opéra orchestra : "too few double-basses and too many cellos."⁽¹⁰⁾

With regard to musical rhythm, Rousseau declares that it "s'appelle aujourd'hui *mesure*"; that is to say he confuses it with metre, or what we should call "time". Being, like Burney,⁽¹¹⁾ unable to conceive of rhythmic music except within the framework of regularly recurring barlines, he complains (art. 'Orchestre') of "le défaut de mesure et le caractère indéterminé de la musique française". But Rameau had his answer ready in the 'Erreurs sur la musique dans l'Encyclopédie' : "Les sentiments du cœur, les passions, ne peuvent être bien rendus qu'en altérant la mesure." At the same time he delivered a sharp counter-thrust : "A layman who needs to be excited and exhilarated by rhythm because, apart

(9) Art. 'Expression'.

(10) A flat contradiction of Rousseau's opinion as expressed in his letter to Grimm of 1750. See p. 99 of the present article.

(11) Dr. Burney was severely shocked by the eleven consecutive bars of recitative, each with a different time-signature, which occur in Rameau's 'Zaïs'.

from it, he can only distinguish high sounds from low and loud ones from soft, is to be pardoned; but one who calls himself a Musician and wishes to dogmatize . . . !” In ‘Erreurs’ he stoutly disclaims, on behalf of French music, any liking for thick and noisy accompaniments: “one should not be aware of an accompaniment, but only of its absence”. And he adds that in any case the loudness of music has nothing whatever to do with its texture.⁽¹²⁾

The following passage from Rousseau’s article ‘Accompagnement’ is quoted in ‘Erreurs’, with the addition of a sly parenthesis:

The Italians mistrust figures; indeed they scarcely need the score, which they supplement by their quick and sensitive hearing: without any such business they accompany extremely well (one should add “to those who do not know”).

Accusing Rousseau of a “*remarque frivole*”, Rameau goes on to say that, for the very reason that they work by ear, Italian accompanists gain little assistance from figures: so that their modulations are at fault as soon as they become at all ambitious. Such criticism of Italian superficiality occurs repeatedly in ‘Erreurs’, which strongly defends the characteristic French chorus “*genre noble*”, remarking that a slow chorus with good harmonic progressions goes straight to the soul, without the aid of any figuration or attractive melody: it is quite different from the purely aural pleasure of an agreeable or merely lively tune on voice or instrument. “*L’un se rapporte directement à l’âme, l’autre ne passe pas le canal de l’oreille.*” Here, on the other hand, is its view of the typical *aria di bravura*:

Les musiciens italiens ne cherchent en général qu’à amuser l’oreille par des mouvemens qui égaient, qui excitent, qui animent, par des roulades où le Chanteur puisse se faire admirer, et par des doux, des forts, des hauts, des bas, à la portée de tout Musicien.

It is perhaps worth quoting the peroration of this rather didactic essay, as an example of Rameau’s uncompromising way of expressing himself:

I have written at length . . . simply to set the Editors of the Encyclopedic Dictionary on the path of those Truths, which they ignore, neglect, or conceal in favour of errors, ill-considered criticisms, and even opinions: as if Authority, still less Opinion, had any place in the Sciences; above all in Music, where one should simply interpret nature, as I always try to do. We may hope that more attention will be paid to this in future.

⁽¹²⁾ Cf. ‘Code de musique pratique’ (1760): “There are many ways of diminishing the noise without mutilating the harmony.”

We have seen the snub with which d'Alembert met the 'Erreurs'. Rameau, on his side, saw fit to write to d'Alembert :

Vos philosophes, vos gens de lettres et artistes, que vous prenez pour juges de vos opinions, n'ont peut-être encore écouté que des chansons, même dans un âge avancé.

Rousseau's next pamphlet, 'Examen de deux principes avancés par M. Rameau dans sa brochure intitulée Erreurs sur la Musique dans l'Encyclopédie' (the titles of the Encyclopedia polemics were as cumulative as those about 'Omphale' had been), was written in the same year, 1755, but published only after Rameau's death in 1764. Meanwhile the great critic contented himself with writing : "Of all artists, musicians have the least time for reading. That is only too clear from the manner in which many composers speak of their art."

Thus the great opera controversy degenerated into a series of personal thrusts. Rameau, his back against the wall, continued in his late seventies to write protesting pamphlets ; but he could not prevent his work from falling out of fashion. In the words of Professor Edward J. Dent :

The Italians won the "war of the *bouffons*", as it was called—a war mainly of journalists as one might imagine—because their little operas were human and alive, while Rameau was an ageing man, a supreme master, but master of a dying tradition.

The quality of his later operas did not help his cause, and by 1760 Grimm voiced the thoughts of many, in 'Correspondance littéraire' :

I would rather have written one air by Hasse or Buranello than the whole collected works of this so-called First Musician in the Land.

The failure of 'Les Paladins' and the composer's death in 1764 meant that his last tragedy, 'Les Boréades', was neither performed nor published ; yet, ironically enough, only a few months before he died, he was given a signal mark of royal approval. Laloy tells us that in May

Le Roi lui octroyait des lettres de noblesse que d'Hozier enregistre en Septembre : Un écu d'azur à une colombe d'argent, tenant dans son bec un rameau d'olivier d'or. Cet écu timbré d'un casque de profil orné de ses lambrequins d'or, d'azur et d'argent.⁽¹²⁾

In summing up a contemporary view of Rameau's music, we may again quote Diderot as one of its more impartial, though by no

(12) "Azure a dove argent holding in his beak a branch of olive or ; the shield surmounted by an esquire's helmet with mantling of the three colours."

means favourable critics. He undoubtedly voiced the Age of Reason's comment on that old-fashioned type of French libretto from which Rameau seldom escaped: "Le monde enchanté peut amuser aux enfants, il n'y a que le monde réel qui plaise à la raison." Diderot, who was counted responsible for the scathing epigram suggested for emblazonment on the Opéra drop-curtain: HIC MARSYAS APOLLINEM,⁽¹⁴⁾ gives his general criticism of the composer's music in 'Le Neveu de Rameau': it is, as we should expect, the fashionable viewpoint of *tout Paris* on the eve of Gluck's arrival:

Him of far renown, the musician who delivered us from Lully's plainsong that we have been chanting for a hundred years and more. The author of so many unintelligible visions and apocalyptic truths on the theory of music, of which no man, neither he nor anyone else, has ever understood anything, and from whom we still have a certain number of operas of some harmony, bits of songs, disjointed ideas, uproars of music, flights, triumphs, fireworks and sparks, glory and murmurs of victory, as long as you like, dance-tunes which will go down to eternity: all of which, having finished off Lully the Florentine, will receive burial of the Italian virtuosos, a thing which he foresaw and which made him sullen and sad and crabbed; for there is no more cross-grained creature (not even the pretty woman awaking to a pimple on her nose) than an author threatened with outliving his reputation.

(14) Rousseau and Grimm both quote an anonymous expansion of this epigram:

O Pergolèse inimitable,
Quand notre orchestre impitoyable
T'immole sous son violon,
Je crois qu'au rebours de la fable
Marsyas écorche Apollon.

HOURS WITH DOMENICO SCARLATTI

BY KATHLEEN DALE

Vivi felice! With these admonitory words did Domenico Scarlatti conclude the short preface to a volume of his own sonatas—a preface in which he begs the reader, be he professional or amateur, not to expect a profound intention in his compositions, but simply ingenious humour.

Whether Scarlatti's injunction to "live happily" applies to existence in general, or to the playing of his own sonatas in particular, is not quite clear; but for the purposes of this essay it may be considered as referring to the entirely delightful occupation of exploring the whole of his output for a keyboard instrument—an occupation which can be spread over a few weeks, or several months, or even a year or two, according to the player's eagerness to become acquainted with the collection of 549 sonatas. Of these, 545 form the "complete edition" edited by Alessandro Longo and published by Ricordi & Co., a set of eleven volumes (ten and a supplement), in which the sonatas are grouped by the editor into suites according to key. The remaining four sonatas have recently been printed for the first time; they are edited by Richard Newton and issued by the Oxford University Press.

The prospect of playing the whole of this large collection may perhaps seem rather alarming. But whereas the studying of the whole corpus of a great composer's work in strict chronological order—for instance, the 52 pianoforte sonatas by Haydn, or the whole of Schubert's more than 600 songs, or all Beethoven's string quartets—is an experience as disturbing as it is thrilling, the playing of all Scarlatti's 549, unencumbered either by the necessity of having to pay attention to the order in which they were written (for this is not known) or of following his development as a composer (which is consequently impossible), is, on the contrary, like journeying in a land where it is always spring.

Although Scarlatti wrote all his sonatas for the harpsichord, they are seldom played on that instrument to-day. A harpsichord is a somewhat rare luxury, and, though no one could deny that upon this instrument the sonatas sound infinitely more apt and alive

than they do on the modern piano, yet, for practical reasons, Scarlatti's work has come to be considered as the lawful property of the pianist, and as such it will be regarded in these lines.

While it must be acknowledged that the truly adequate interpretation of Scarlatti's works calls for a very high standard of skill and finish on the part of the performer, the sonatas can yet be a source of intense enjoyment to the musician-pianist playing them quietly in his own home, exploring their beauties and reflecting upon the strange fact that out of all this wealth of invention such a very small proportion finds its way into the concert-room.

To try to classify such a very large number of separate short pieces, almost all of which are written in binary form, into any sort of scheme, whereby the explorer may be directed towards the type he most wishes to find, is indeed a very complicated task. The sonatas may certainly be quite clearly divided into two main classes—the brilliant and the expressive; but each class is capable of division into a number of more exact groups. It is proposed in this essay to enumerate a few of the most representative of these sub-divisions, and to give a short table of reference which would enable a reader to find quickly, by number, the sonatas considered as belonging to any particular category.

Scarlatti has many moods. He can be recklessly gay, disarmingly innocent, drily humorous, delightfully crude, ridiculously precise and tenderly contemplative. But he is neither tragic, heroic nor pretentious, nor does he play havoc with his player's emotions. The Scarlatti pianist can undoubtedly "live happily", especially as no unduly heavy demands are made upon his technique. In the playing of these sonatas the race may indeed be to the swift, but the battle is certainly not to the strong—it is to the accurate. A rare degree of marksmanship is necessary if the constantly occurring wide skips are to be safely negotiated. The deft Domenico evidently took a particular delight, too, in writing passages in which the hands have to be kept crossed for so long at a time, and at such precarious angles, that the player must needs be endowed with the attributes of a tight-rope walker. Perhaps the greatest sources of danger are the frequent changes of clef: for these, a very sharp look-out has continually to be kept, for they occur at the most unlikely places, and a disregard of them may produce catastrophic results. Ambidexterity is a quality greatly to be desired, too, for no quarter is given to the player's left hand: it is treated as the equal of the right. Nevertheless, on the whole, Scarlatti is not really difficult to play at sight.

1) ⁽¹⁾ In dividing the sonatas into various categories of style, pride of place may perhaps be given to a class which might be named the "perpetuo". Though the sonatas of this kind are by no means all moto-perpetuos in the strictest meaning of the term, they nevertheless possess the accepted characteristics of that form—swiftness and irresistible continuity. They are more exhilarating to play than any of the other varieties, and produce in the player something of the sensation caused by a fast canter along a hill-top. It is difficult to refrain from repeating any one of these pieces several times in succession after first playing it through, for one is loth to leave such satisfying examples of speed and high spirits. The distinguishing feature of this species is the steady flow of attractive passages, which lie so beautifully under the hands that their performance is as easy as their effect is thrilling. Sonata No. 22 in E minor is particularly representative of the group. It abounds in interesting passages and contains a figure incorporating the broken chord of the minor ninth, which is noteworthy for its musical as well as its pianistic effect. No. 380, also in E minor, has two charming marks of distinction: the figure treated sequentially at bars 19–26 (and again at 50–57), which is so delicately adjusted between the two hands that the fingers feel positively flattered as they ripple it off; and the scale played by both hands chasing each other up the keyboard an octave apart in pitch and a quaver apart in time, quite regardless of where the main accent should fall. The sonata is full of varied and effective figures.

2) In contrast to this stream-lined assembly there may be placed a smaller group of sonatas so precise in character that they sound as if they might have been composed expressly to serve as the musical accompaniment to puppet plays. There is something about the awkward melodic intervals and halting progress of the music which suggests the stilted, unnatural movements of the little puppet figures. Some of these pieces, for instance No. 23 in E and No. 206 in D, may represent only one scene from a puppet play, but a few, especially Nos. 222 in A, 427 in E minor and No. 23 of the Supplement, in F major and minor, give the impression of following an entire scenario, complete with several acts, changes of scene and moments of climax. Or perhaps this group is not really concerned with puppets at all, but is inspired by Scarlatti's association with the artificial life and the archaic customs of the early eighteenth-century court of Spain, where he spent twenty-five years in the service of the Bourbons.

⁽¹⁾ For a fuller list of sonatas that can be classified under various categories, see the Table of Reference at the end of this article.

3) Scarlatti is not commonly thought of as a composer of serene and expressive works. Nevertheless, there is a considerable group of sonatas which may truly be classified as still-life pictures, and which are the very embodiment of wistful tenderness. They are on an altogether different plane from the usual Scarlattian bustle and stir, and in playing them the performer is aware that there were times when the composer was able to withdraw himself from the busy world and to look into his own soul. In this fairly extensive group attention must be specially drawn to a few which are of supreme beauty. No. 33 in B minor and No. 403 in C major, with their long phrases of unequal lengths and their comparatively few points of rest, give an impression of continuity without monotony somewhat rare in works of the period. No. 267 in D minor is of the same character, but its cadence-points are still fewer, and it is pervaded by an even stronger feeling of progress towards a definite but quiet consummation. In another D minor Sonata, No. 362, an *Andante* in 3-4 time, this same system of dispensing with points of rest is carried to the utmost limit. Throughout its fifty-six bars, with the exception of perfect cadences at the first double bar and at the end of the piece, there is hardly a moment when the music does not flow so inevitably that its progress cannot be arrested. The dotted quaver figure, so often favoured by Purcell, persists, with but a couple of breaks, throughout the whole Sonata, yet the effect is soothing rather than monotonous. No. 187 in F minor, while far more conventional as to phrase-lengths and cadence-points, is composed of figures built of upward-resolving suspensions and accented passing notes which, in themselves, convey a sense of wistfulness. There is a poignant moment at bars 21-22, when a descending diminished-seventh arpeggio in the left hand is decorated by appoggiaturas in the right hand. Perhaps the loveliest of all in this group is No. 383, also in F minor—a key in which Scarlatti often produced magic results. The texture of this particular Sonata is even more closely wrought than that of the works just described. The music flows gently in quavers all the time, even over the first double bar and right on until the very end. But while the music flows unceasingly, time stands still for the player lost in contemplation of such loveliness. For sheer perfection of form, content, style and atmosphere this little work is unequalled by any other Scarlatti sonata of the same peaceful character. How Scarlatti himself must have loved writing it can be felt from the apparent reluctance with which he leaves each phrase, prolonging it as far as possible and breathing into it the utmost beauty until it glides into the succeeding one. He even lingers over the final

cadence, extending it an additional two bars while the left-hand part decorates the right hand's tonic chord with a little purling arpeggio. Sonata No. 9 of the Supplement, also a poetic *Andante*, holds a unique position, for it, alone of all the 549, is distinguished by bearing the indication "also for organ". Its greater aptness for this instrument is evident from the contrapuntal style of its writing, from the *sostenuto* portions and from the number of short passages repeated alternately *f* and *p*, which would lend themselves to a change of manual or of registration on the organ. It may be remarked that, in contrast to Bach's harpsichord works, of which such a large proportion, by reason of their contrapuntal texture, would sound equally well played upon the organ, extremely few of Scarlatti's harpsichord works, with the exception of 4) the four or five fugues and 5) some sonatas written throughout in two-part counterpoint, would lend themselves to this change of instrument. While no date can be assigned to the Sonata just mentioned, it may perhaps be thought of as belonging to his earlier years, when he was less exclusively devoted to harpsichord playing.

To pass from this reposeful group to another more lively is like leaving a country retreat for a busy town. In his book, 'A Background for Domenico Scarlatti', Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell, drawing a comparison between Alexander Pope and Domenico Scarlatti, expresses the opinion that both Pope and Scarlatti preferred the company of those who lived in towns.

Pope [he writes] was, most particularly, the product of London: Scarlatti was, more than all else, the Neapolitan. He had, even, the alert nerves of someone who is used to traffic. No one who has passed his life in the country could have written the music of Scarlatti. He has no time to waste, and makes his points as sharply and rapidly as a jazz composer. The character of each separate piece is discernible from the start, even if it is the certainty that a surprise is coming.

6) The sonatas now to be considered might have been composed purposely to prove the truth of this hypothesis. While they are as full of life as those of the "perpetuo" group, their hall-mark is varied activity instead of continuity. They are the busiest pieces imaginable and may fittingly receive the epithet "Street Scenes". While playing them one feels there is a great deal going on in the busy thoroughfares of Naples; the rumbling of wheels, the cries of vendors, the sounds of itinerant musicians and the everlasting chatter and occasional brawling of the excitable inhabitants. Typical are these sonatas: No. 246 in B flat, its reiterated figures giving the effect of persistent street cries; No. 250, a *Presto* in B flat,

where everybody and everything is in a tearing hurry ; No. 264 in D, in which a street dancer turns up to give two short displays of prowess ; and No. 272 in G, during the course of which some itinerant musicians are to be heard and one may be permitted to imagine a mouth-organ in full cry at bars 59-60. Among these street scenes there is one which could be claimed as nocturnal in character. This is No. 415 in D, which, with its alternating sections of quickly reiterated notes and crashing chords, sounds like the performance of a brilliant player on the Spanish guitar. Some of the crashes are so skilfully designed to be sustained by the right hand, while the left hand proceeds to the next change of harmony, that the effect is that of sounds echoing through the night.

Unlike Couperin, Scarlatti did not give titles to his compositions, and the 'Cat's Fugue' is the only one which has acquired a name to distinguish it from its companions. 7a, b, c) But it will hardly be denied that he often had a definite poetic basis for his sonatas. Some of them are little tone-poems ; some are almost impressionistic, and a few would seem to be forerunners of pieces written at a later period by composers of the romantic school. 7a) Scarlatti's fondness for bell effects may well have suggested ideas to Liszt, who, a century later, rediscovered and helped to make known his work, at that date (1839) still mostly unpublished. Sonatas Nos. 196, 369 and 446 have peals of bells ; No. 218 a distant, rather melancholy chime ; No. 323 a solemn, almost eerie tolling, while No. 28 of the Supplement—a whole festival of bell-ringing—is perhaps Scarlatti's most Lisztian piece. The music at bars 83-87 seems to point forward to a passage in Liszt's 'Cloches du Soir' from the Suite 'L'arbre de Noël'.

7b) Another cluster of sonatas seem to represent hunting scenes. Lively fanfares occur in several : in Nos. 107, 164, 192 and 364, all in the key of D, in No. 228 in F and No. 470 in E. But all these are eclipsed by Sonata No. 290 in G. In this there are so many horn calls, and they have a feeling of such urgency and expectation, that one's thoughts go flying to the introduction and opening scene of Act II of 'Tristan and Isolde', where this same fundamental idea finds its incomparably rich fulfilment. (Of course this is not to suggest that Wagner could possibly have known Scarlatti's miniature !)

7c) A small group of the sonatas seem to be concerned with impressions of country life. Sonata No. 138, an *Adagio* in A minor, is sad and plaintive like the song of unhappy birds. It has the same quiet melancholy of Schumann's 'Vogel als Prophet', but it is even more despairing. Ravel's title, 'Oiseaux tristes', would fit it.

No. 439 in C major, a great contrast, conveys the chirruping of a company of happier birds vying with each other in song while one of their number gives an occasional mocking laugh (bars 65-80 and 142-end). No. 132 in A is a charming barcarolle, the opening of which might easily have been penned by Mendelssohn. No. 198 in F is a true 'Clair de lune'. It is remarkable not only for its unusual length—eight pages as against the usual two to four of most of the sonatas—but also for its many modulations and its four changes of key-signature. The music portrays both the coldness and the radiance of moonlight, just as does Debussy's piece of that name. Another Debussy piece, 'The snow is dancing', is brought to mind by Sonata No. 354, the pattering finger-work suggesting snow-flakes flying hither and thither. No. 344 in A gives the impression of a swarm of bees at work, particularly in the section where the right hand executes a trill lasting for six or more bars while the left hand runs busily beneath; and, even more, in the few bars between 132 and 144, where humming is suggested by a compressed chromatic passage in the middle register of the keyboard. If this piece conjures up the good qualities of bees, No. 41 of the Supplement, in B flat, exhibits the less pleasing attributes of the wasp. At almost every alternate bar there is a crisp ornament, either a mordent or an acciacatura, and the feeling throughout is one of waspish spite. No. 349, a particularly charming *Allegretto* in G, is packed with demi-semiquaver figures which run so swiftly within such narrow confines that they might well represent the quick, short scamperings of a mouse. There is some almost Lisztian finger-work in this sonata.

8) Not many of the sonatas are written in the early dance forms, though a few of them are marked as Minuets, one as 9) a Gavotte, and one as 10) a Gigue and Minuet. Of the minuets, No. 82 in G is a most beautiful example of formal design coupled with graceful pianistic devices which range both high and low over the keyboard. But Scarlatti did not often cast his work in this kind of formal mould. When dances were in question he preferred to write gaily and with abandon. In the Supplement there are three consecutive sonatas, Nos. 38, 39 and 40, in 3-8, $\frac{3}{4}$ and 6-8 time respectively—strangely enough all in the key of B flat—which are probably the gayest and most recklessly happy of all his hundreds of lively pieces. It is not only that they *sound* like dances, but, to the player, they *feel* like dances, too. This is because the hand and arm movements entailed are extremely active owing to the frequent crossing of hands in No. 38, to the series of wide skips—often two octaves and sometimes as much as three octaves in extent—in No. 39 and to the

swinging 6-8 rhythm and the broken chords in contrary motion of No. 40.

Who, after playing them, could find it in his heart to refuse Scarlatti's invitation to "live happily"?

TABLE OF REFERENCE

The numbers refer to the Longo Edition.

1. Nos. 14, 22, 30, 55, 65, 77, 87, 119, 129, 135, 149, 370, 374, 380, 385, 386, 388, 401, 416, 449, 455, 460, 461, 474, 475, 476, 479, 480, 481, 486, 489, 494, 500. Supplement Nos. 19 and 26. Newton Edition No. 1.
2. Nos. 5, 23, 116, 206, 222, 223, 426, 427, 459. Supplement Nos. 21 and 23.
3. Nos. 4, 12, 18, 27, 33, 59, 61, 64, 99, 108, 173, 187, 248, 267, 312, 332, 382, 383, 403, 438, 443, 468, 497. Supplement Nos. 7, 9, 27.
4. Nos. 158, 336, 462, 499, and the middle section of No. 36.
5. Nos. 26, 50, 61, 72, 76, 100, 166, 168, 171, 216, 219, 244, 245, 271. Supplement Nos. 5, 7, 34.
6. Nos. 182, 246, 250, 264, 272, 310, 355, 415, 429. Supplement Nos. 3, 4, 12, 16, 17.
- 7a. Nos. 196, 218, 323, 369, 446. Supplement No. 28.
- 7b. Nos. 107, 164, 192, 228, 290, 364, 470.
- 7c. Nos. 132, 138, 198, 344, 349, 354, 439. Supplement No. 41.
8. Nos. 74, 82, 97, middle section of 168, 208, 357. Supplement No. 36.
9. No. 58.
10. No. 75.

A Thematic Index of all the sonatas, in order of tonality and rhythm, is published by Ricordi & Co. (Edition Ricordi, No. 1912).

PROBLEMS OF MODERN HARMONIC EVOLUTION

By MOSCO CARNER

TAKING a bird's-eye view of more than a thousand years of harmonic evolution—from the time when Western musicians first tried to combine sounds of different pitch and grope after the harmonic laws, inherent in our sound-material, up to the present day when every one of these laws seems to have been abandoned and harmony to be no longer guided by overriding principles of general application and validity—the keen observer is bound to detect some problems that have occupied composers and scholars alike at all times and found different solutions at different periods of our musical history. Among these there are three problems which in the writer's view have so vitally influenced the course of harmonic evolution that their various solutions represent in fact the main stream in the general history of harmony. They are (a) the relation between consonance and dissonance and, with it, the fixing of the norm of dissonance, (b) the balance between horizontal and vertical polyphony⁽¹⁾ and (c) the concept of tonality. Let us first consider the relation between consonance and dissonance and the fixing of the latter's norm. This relation is only a special manifestation in the realm of music of a general psychological phenomenon that accompanies our entire mental, emotional and physical life. It is the phenomenon of tension and relaxation. Our life-processes are governed by it in exactly the same way as the "life" of the sea is governed by high and low tides. A sea constantly at low tide is dull and lifeless; life without tension—if this were possible at all—appeals perhaps to the philosopher or the esoteric, but is insipid and tedious.⁽²⁾ And so it is with music. Music without dissonance is monotonous and aesthetically most unsatisfactory. What gives life to music is movement, and musical movement is born not only of rhythmic energies but also of the

⁽¹⁾ The term "polyphony" is here used in its strict sense denoting music that consists of simultaneous combinations of sound as opposed to purely single-line music such as, for instance, the Gregorian chant and a certain order of Oriental music.

⁽²⁾ This is what Goethe meant with his 'Nichts ist schwerer zu ertragen als eine Reihe von schönen Tagen'.

interplay of dissonance (tension) and its resolution, consonance (relaxation). Just as our life-processes are dependent on the "right" proportion between tension and relaxation, so is musical movement largely dependent on the "right" ratio between dissonance and consonance.

But what is this "right" ratio? Is there a precise and universally valid answer to this question? The history of harmonic evolution is to a great extent one long and continual attempt to provide an answer. Many answers, it is true, have been found, but none of them was of such a nature as to hold good for all styles and periods. No particular solution of what is this "right" ratio between dissonance and consonance was fundamental or final for any particular phase of harmonic evolution. The reason is that there is no absolute standard or norm by which to distinguish and separate dissonance from consonance. There is only a relative norm; in other words our distinction between dissonance and consonance is based upon a constantly changing perception of satisfactory and less satisfactory sound combinations. In fact, the theory of the so-called beats or throbs which are the result of the discrepancy in the vibration numbers of two notes of different pitch, proves that there is, with the exception of the octave, no interval of an absolutely concordant nature. Even the time-honoured concords of our text-books on traditional harmony—the perfect fifth and fourth, the major and minor thirds—are discords in that, owing to the presence of more or less perceptible beats, they have a proportionally varying degree of harshness. And it is this degree of harshness that determines our mental impression of satisfactory and less satisfactory intervals and discords. No strict dividing-line can therefore be drawn between consonance and dissonance. The clear distinction of classical harmony between them was fictitious, as the theory of the beats shows, and is, as modern music exemplifies, being gradually replaced by a sliding scale of intervals of varying tension-degree. It has taken music well over a thousand years to discover the relative nature of concords or discords—it depends which side of this sliding scale one looks at—and it is this phenomenon which made it impossible to find a generally valid answer for the question of what is the "right" ratio between consonance and dissonance. Every period had its own right proportion, every period had its own right fixing of the norm of dissonance, and every period thought of its own norm as absolute.

In this process of finding the norm of dissonance another general phenomenon is noticeable. This is that dissonance, the "foreigner", becomes gradually acclimatized among the consonances, his

"hosts", and thus loses its former dissonant character. In other words, the musical ears of one generation became gradually accustomed to what the preceding generation considered a harsh dissonance, with the result that the former discord comes to be accepted as a concord. Think, for instance, of the minor thirds which medieval music considered for a long time as discordant intervals, and as late as in Bach's time this view manifested itself in the avoidance of a minor third at the conclusion of a piece which was either in a "minor" mode or a minor key, and its replacement by the major third, the so-called *tierce de Picardie*, or simply by a bare fifth. In Haydn's and Mozart's time there was no longer any doubt as to the concordant nature of the minor third. The history of the perfect fourth is another example of the changeableness and instability of such norms.

It is clear that this constant process of "acclimatization" of the dissonance necessitated a corresponding raising of the norm. If dissonances were in course of time accepted by the musical ears of successive generations as consonances, and if harmonic movement was to be kept going, the increase both in number and degree of new dissonances was inevitable. Inevitable also because this whole process was subject to another law from general psychology. This is the so-called "Weber's Law", which says that "in order to secure a just noticeable increase in the intensity of a sensation, it is necessary to increase the stimulus arousing the sensation by a constant fraction of itself". Translated into terms of harmony this means that given a certain period in musical history with its own norm of dissonance the subsequent period must, in order to satisfy its own need and feeling for dissonance, raise that norm and seek discords of a higher degree of harshness than that which was considered as the utmost limit in the previous period. The seventeenth century was loth to use the triad with a minor third at the conclusion of a piece because its norm of dissonance was very low; the eighteenth century raised this norm so that the minor triad and its inversions were included in the family of concords; and the nineteenth century again raised this norm so that dominant sevenths and diminished sevenths fell in the category of concords, or rather satisfactory discords which required no resolution. And this process continued until we arrive at present-day music, which has reached such a high norm of dissonance that all the former discords of classical and romantic harmony have come to be regarded as more or less satisfactory in themselves, and that only an "orgy" of dissonances can now satisfy our need for dissonant sound-combinations. This only confirms the psychological necessity for a constant "increase of the stimulus

arousing the sensation" of which Weber's Law speaks. The same necessity accounts also for the gradual replacement of the common triads, first by dominant sevenths, then by other fundamental dissonances, and finally by any dissonant chord formation, the intensification of chromatic alterations, the ever-increasing use of dissonant unessential notes and the ruthlessness with which the modern style of horizontal writing is used in order to produce harmonic clashes of the utmost violence.

But in spite of all this the fundamental law of tension and relaxation is still making itself felt. It manifests itself in the fact that dissonances of a higher degree are often followed by dissonances of a lower degree of harshness, thus creating the feeling of relieved tension and relative resolution of the higher dissonance. But there is one thing to be considered in this kind of resolution, if we compare it with the resolutions of traditional harmony. Take, for instance, the following chord progression :



It is obvious that the first chord possesses a higher degree of dissonance than the second. Both chords are discords from the point of view of traditional harmony, yet every musician will agree that by resolving the first chord on to the second the harmonic tension has decreased. But if we are confronted with such modern chords as, for instance, these from Schoenberg's 'Klavierstück', Op. 33a :



how are we to tell with any measure of accuracy and certainty which of these chords possess a higher and which a lower degree of tension or dissonance? Is not the very fact that in analysing modern music we have to pose this question continually—a question which can hardly arise with classical music—a strong proof that modern music is still waiting for its norms of dissonance to be established? It would seem that nowadays every composer has his own private norms, as it were, and that according to them he determines which

interval or combination of intervals, *i.e.* chords, have for him a higher and which a lower degree of tension. This, I think, is, or rather has been, the prevailing impression. For quite recently we have had two very notable attempts by two outstanding modern musicians to settle this controversial question of tension-degree and to establish norms of dissonances which are to be valid for every possible harmonic combination of modern music. I am referring to Paul Hindemith's 'Unterweisung im Tonsatz' ⁽³⁾ and Ernst Křenek's 'Studies in Counterpoint'. ⁽⁴⁾ Both composers have worked out nearly identical tables in which the intervals are ranged according to their degrees of tension, and in which the two extremes are formed by the intervals of the perfect octave and of the major seventh, the tritone being regarded as a more or less neutral interval. These tables give us a means by which we may not only determine the tension-degrees of intervals and chords but also regulate chord progressions and thus plan and create crescendos and diminuendos of harmonic tension—a device that can also be pressed into the service of formal designs such as climaxes and subsequent relief.

It would perhaps be premature to regard the result of these two attempts as final in the sense of absolute validity for modern music at its present stage; but it can be said without hesitation that both Hindemith's and Křenek's differentiations and classifications of tension-degrees are invaluable as sign-posts in the maze of modern dissonances, and will perhaps form the foundation of a future harmonic system.

It must, however, be admitted that the absence of fixed norms of dissonances up to now and the extremely discordant nature of modern harmony in general represent the main stumbling-block for most people who wish to arrive at a fair and unbiassed judgment of modern music. But it would certainly take them a step nearer to it if they realized that the present state of flux can only be temporary, for historical precedent warrants that it will sooner or later crystallize into the more orderly and stable condition for which Hindemith's and Křenek's attempts seem to prepare the ground. Besides, it must always be borne in mind that this present state of affairs is only the logical outcome of an evolutionary process which is in the last resort, as I have tried to show, determined by psychological laws to which our whole life is subject.

Towards this evolutionary process the public has always at first reacted unfavourably. It seems that, generally speaking, our musical ears are much more sensitive to the vertical factor than to

⁽³⁾ Schott's Söhne, Mainz, 1937.

⁽⁴⁾ G. Schirmer, Inc., New York, 1940.

any other in music. We are inclined to tolerate and accept much more readily melodic boldness and rhythmical extravagance than harmonic innovations. The history of harmonic evolution bears this out in a most convincing manner. In the fourteenth century Jean de Muris complained in his 'Ars Contrapunti' of the use of new dissonances; at the beginning of the seventeenth Monteverdi shocked his contemporaries with his harmonic audacities; Beethoven was severely taken to task for the harshness and stridency of his harmonies in the 'Eroica'; Wagner's harmonic innovations were regarded as scandalous; Strauss's 'Elektra' was responsible for the introduction of the term "cacophony" into the jargon of musical criticism⁽⁶⁾; and at a performance, in Vienna, of Křenek's opera 'Jonny spielt auf' at which the writer was present, a certain clique in the audience demonstrated their unfavourable reaction in a rather unorthodox manner by throwing stink-bombs and letting loose white mice. Indeed, the story of scandals and press battles after performances of certain works by Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Bartók, Stravinsky, Hindemith and many other modernists, scandals usually provoked by the daring harmonic language of these works could fill volumes.

So much for dissonance. Let us now turn to our next problem—the balance between horizontal and vertical writing. Ever since the beginning of Western music the pendulum has kept swinging between these two resources. First we had pure and simple horizontalism in the single-line melodies of ancient Greek music⁽⁷⁾ and the Gregorian chant.⁽⁸⁾ This period lasted roughly some 1400 years (600 B.C. to A.D. 800). Then came the discovery of polyphony born of the attempt to sing the same melody simultaneously at a different pitch. The result was the first, though extremely crude, form of horizontal polyphony—the *organum* and the *faburdens*, producing the first harmonies such as perfect fifths, fourths and major and minor thirds. (This was only natural as the two notes of each of these intervals stand in close acoustical relationship to each other and constitute the overtones most easily heard in the harmonic series of any given note. Human instinct began to grope after the natural fundamental harmonic

⁽⁶⁾ There is an amusing cartoon made at the time when 'Elektra' had just come out. It shows the scene of an execution at which the wretched delinquent is slowly tortured to death by the sounds which Strauss in the role of an executioner-cum-trumpeter, blows into his ears. In his left hand Strauss is seen holding the score of 'Elektra'.

⁽⁷⁾ The attempts of the ancient Greeks at some sort of polyphony, the so-called heterophony, were historically of no consequence.

⁽⁸⁾ Single-line horizontalism seems to represent the very first stage of musical development. Polyphony, whether horizontal or vertical, argues already a capacity for correlating different sounds, a capacity which, as modern psychology of the child and of primitive races has shown, points to a later and higher stage of general intelligence.

laws.) From this primitive form of polyphony emerged a more elaborate kind of horizontal writing in the descant which led from the *ars antiqua*, as exemplified in the music of the Notre Dame School, to the Italian *ars nova* of the fourteenth century, the early English music, the Netherland composers, and finally to Orlandus Lassus Palestrina, and the Elizabethans, with whom the pendulum had reached the middle point on its way to vertical polyphony. It was characteristic of the harmony of this period, which lasted roughly 800 years (A.D. 800 to 1600), that it resulted more or less by accident from the simultaneous singing of two and more parts. This is best expressed in Zarlino's 'Istitutioni harmoniche' (1558), where he says that "l'harmonia nasce dal cantare che fanno insieme le parte". During the next 150 years the pendulum had swung so far towards vertical polyphony, or homophony, as it is frequently termed, that in 1772 Rameau was able to state the very opposite of Zarlino's dictum when he said in his 'Traité de l'harmonie' that "la mélodie provient de l'harmonie". In the course of this period the tonal basis of the music up to about 1600, the six modes, had gradually become obsolete and its place was now taken by the diatonic system with only two fundamental scales, major and minor. Upon this a chordal system was founded in which the common triad constituted the nucleus of all other chord-formations. This chordal system with its clearly defined relations and functions led through a transitional period (Bach) to the homophonic style of the Viennese classics and the early romantics. It is upon the harmonic language of this period that our text-book harmony is based.

The culminating point of vertical polyphony was, however, reached in the works of the later Wagner and the school of the late romantics such as Wolf, Bruckner, Mahler, Strauss, Reger, Schreker, Delius, the French impressionists, and in the early style of some modern composers such as Schoenberg, Berg and Stravinsky. This development, which may be said to have terminated with the Great War, represents *the* harmonic period in our musical history. It is the period in which every possibility of vertical construction was exploited to the full. The chord as such became an end in itself. Its *raison d'être* lay not so much in its function as vertical support of the melody as in the mere sensation of sound and colour it was able to create. The degree of tension and the tonal colour, which partly depends on it, were the chief criteria by which composers were guided in their harmonic technique. This explains the growth during this period of chords into clusters of notes—often veritable chord "monsters"—taking the place of the simple three- and four-note chords of classical harmony. And as harmonic tension and

tone-colour were, apart from particular ways of instrumentation and lay-out of intervals and chords, dependent upon the degree and intensity of dissonance, it becomes clear why this period had to resort to novel chord formations which showed any possible combination of dissonant intervals and were no longer exclusively based upon the principle of superimposed thirds. In this we clearly see the close interplay between the problem of dissonance and that of vertical polyphony. This strongly pronounced cultivation of the chord *qua* chord also explains the abundance of chromatic alterations, unresolved suspensions and appoggiaturas, anticipations, passing notes and free pedals in the bass and middle parts which were frequently all combined to produce vertical associations of the strangest colour and sound. In fact the simultaneous use of all these devices constitutes an essential characteristic of the harmonic style of this period and largely accounts for its complex nature.

While this process was still in full bloom the reaction against it set in. Verticalism had reached a state of hypertrophy and the pendulum began to swing back again to horizontalism, yet a horizontalism that stood many points higher on the evolutionary spiral than that of the period between 800 and 1600. This new horizontalism is the so-called linear style of modern music. Its beginnings were already discernible in the works of the very same composers who cultivated extreme verticalism. The polyphony of Wagner's later works such as 'Tristan', 'The Mastersingers' and above all 'Parsifal', though born of harmony, contained the seeds of the coming linear style of fifty years hence. Strauss, Mahler, Reger and the early Schoenberg show in their works chordal structures of the utmost complexity cheek by jowl with contrapuntal lines which are set against each other with little regard for the vertical result. And composers such as Bartók, the later Stravinsky, the later Schoenberg and his school, Hindemith, Milhaud, Křenek, Toch, Szymanowski and many others developed this modern form of contrapuntal writing with complete disregard for the harmonic clashes it produced. From this it was but a step to multiple tonality^(*) (bitonality and polytonality) in which the various contrapuntal strands of the musical texture belonged to different keys and thus moved on different tonal planes. The extreme verticalism of the years between 1890 and 1910 was followed by the extreme horizontalism of the period lasting roughly from the Great War to the middle 'thirties. Its violently discordant character was a measure of how high the norm of dissonance had been raised since the

(*) I have adopted this useful term from Sir George Dyson's 'The New Music' (Oxford University Press, 1924).

time when even thirds were still regarded as discords. (This was only natural if we remember Weber's Law.) Thus the close inter-relation between the problem of dissonance and that of the balance between horizontal and vertical polyphony becomes evident.

Yet the verticalism of the preceding period was not entirely dead. It manifested itself in a new technique. This was the contrapuntal combination of chordal streams: instead of single-line, fully harmonized melodies were set against each other, producing streams of chordal blocks which greatly increased the intensity and violence of harmonic clashes. But again it was the horizontal factor that mattered.

And now for our third and last problem: tonality. Ebenezer Prout, in his 'Musical Form', said that "without clearly defined tonality music is impossible". This was written in 1893, when multiple tonality and atonality were things undreamt-of. Yet the conception of tonality which lay behind Prout's statement is still rife among a considerable majority of present-day musicians. It is a conception which is based upon the tonality of classical music, that is a tonal organization in which every note, every chord and every key-scheme stand in well-established and clearly defined relations to a centre, the tonic. This organization is based upon the seven-note diatonic system with its two fundamental scales and their twelve transpositions, the keys. The chief principle upon which this whole organization rests is the relationship of the perfect fifth between notes, chords and keys. There is no doubt that the hierarchical order of classical tonality represents the highest and most organic form of tonal organization ever reached by Western music, and this for the simple reason that the relationship of the fifth upon which it is chiefly based is the most natural and closest one, as the harmonic series proves. (As far as tonal relationship is concerned the relation of the perfect octave is of no consequence.) But there are tonal organizations, such as, for instance, the modal system of the complicated systems of Arabic and Chinese music, which are based upon principles of relationship different from that of classical tonality. This very fact gives us food for thought and will make us, as we shall see presently, reject Prout's statement which represents the general view on this problem. For if we were to accept it the implication would be that all Western music written before and after the period between 1600 and 1890—to say nothing of Oriental and non-European music in general—did not exist for us. It is clear that such a view is untenable and stands in the way of a broader conception of tonality. Nineteenth-century scholars were far too much wrapped up in classical tonality to perceive that it represented

only a very special form of possible tone-relations. That the music based upon this form of tone-relations constitutes one of the greatest periods in musical history should not blind us to the fact that classical tonality has its limitations which musicians of the early romantic period already attempted to get rid of by expanding and enlarging its scope. That this process of expansion gradually led to a break-up of classical tonality and to novel forms of central tone-relations is *ipso facto* a proof that the natural laws underlying classical tonality have only limited validity. Thus the classical conception of tonality seems to be of a similar relative nature as that of the classical norm of dissonance. Just as the norm of dissonance changed with different periods of musical history, so did the conception of what constituted tonal coherence and central relations differ at different times. This argues a much broader conception of tonality than that in which we were all brought up. In order to arrive at such a conception we have to ask ourselves : What is the essential of classical tonality ? What is the general idea underlying it ?

We all agree that, broadly speaking, it is the organizing of our tone-material in such a manner as to establish certain permanent relations and functions between single notes, chords and keys on the one hand, and a centre on the other. This centre consists correspondingly of a single note (tonic note), a single triad (tonic triad) and a single key (tonic key). If we take the mere existence of certain permanent relations and functions of notes in respect of a centre as the general idea of classical tonality, we are bound to admit that a similar idea underlies the music that is not based on classical tonality. Thus certain Oriental music and the music of the church modes have their form of tonality, and so has modern music—by some imagined as a chaotic agglomeration of notes, chords and lines—its own form of tonality in the sense that in a given composition certain notes or sequences of notes, certain chords or progressions of chords, are given preference over others and thus establish temporary centres which have a decisive bearing on the tonal organization of the composition as a whole. In this light even "atonal" music, the music of the Schoenberg school, has its own tonality. For what are Schoenberg's tone-rows but certain sequences of notes which are given preference over others and thus form centres of relationship ? The fact that all the notes occurring in a piece written in twelve-note technique stand in permanent and strictly fixed relations to such a "most-favoured" sequence of notes or its three derivatives constitutes tonality in the broader sense. The "tonic key" is here the particular row upon which the whole piece is based. Considering the theoretically unlimited number of possible rows it

follows that the number of "tonic keys" in twelve-note music is also limitless. Yet this does not alter the fundamental fact that with the adoption of a row as the basis of a whole composition this composition becomes tonally fixed and thus achieves tonal coherence. The term "atonal" is consequently only true in comparison with classical tonality, and is in fact misleading. Twelve-note music has a different kind of tonal organization from that appertaining to classical tonality, and though it must be admitted that it seems as yet artificial and arbitrary, it does make for tonal coherence and thus creates a certain sense of musical logic.⁽⁹⁾

In accepting such a broader view it is necessary, however, that whenever we speak of tonality to qualify it by adding whether we mean the tonal organization of the modes, or the diatonic major-minor system or twelve-note music or the Arabic *maqam* or the Indian *raga* or the Hebrew *Weisen*, thus indicating the different kinds of extant tonal relationships.⁽¹⁰⁾

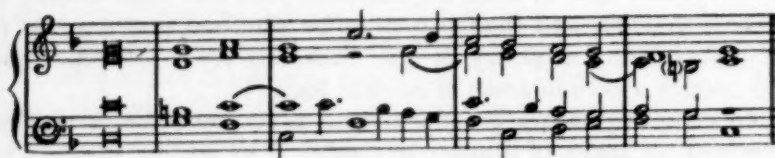
Just as the changes in the norm of dissonance influenced harmonic evolution, so did the various ways in which central tonal relations have been fixed. In other words the vertical aspect of modal music is different from that of the diatonic major-minor system, and this aspect is again different from that of whole-tone music or twelve-note music, and so on. The impression of the apparently chaotic state of modern music of which the uninitiated so often complain is partly due to the fact that these heterogeneous tonalities are frequently found side by side in modern works, modal elements and major-minor diatonicism, whole-tone scales and chromatic scales, chromatically "gingered-up" diatonicism and twelve-note music. And it is only natural that this mixture of "tonal styles" should have deeply affected the harmonic language of our days.

Thus we see how the three problems with which we have dealt here—the relation of consonance and dissonance together with the fixing of norms for the latter, the balance between horizontal and

⁽⁹⁾ I have elaborated this point in greater detail in a book on contemporary harmony which is shortly to appear (Joseph Williams, Ltd., London), and from which I have used, with the publisher's kind permission, some material for the present article.

⁽¹⁰⁾ I was very glad to see that Křenek in his 'Studies in Counterpoint', already mentioned, arrives at the same conclusion that we are in need of a broader conception of tonality. Though he does not elaborate this point, he makes it quite clear when he says in the introduction to his book that "it is undoubtedly possible to establish a broader definition of tonality. One might call tonality any method of setting up recognizable relationships between musical elements. In this sense the system of major and minor keys, characteristic of a certain historical period, would represent but one out of many conceivable aspects of tonality, and music that does not comply with the postulates of this system should show some other system of elementary relationships, i.e. another type of tonality".

vertical polyphony, and tonality—have been in closest interplay to mould and shape the physiognomy of modern harmony, and, I think, the result of this composite process cannot be better demonstrated *ad oculos* than by quoting two examples taken from works between which lie nearly four centuries of harmonic evolution.



THE EASTERN MODAL INFLUENCE

BY DENNIS STOLL

It is customary to commence the history of music with the Greeks, the founders of the theory of the gamut and the modes, but this is evidently incomplete and shortsighted. Too long have the Greeks, intelligent and artistic as they were, prevented us from seeing humanity as a whole. Before their time there existed the whole of the East.

J. COMBARIEU : 'Music—Its Laws and Evolution.'

OUR conscious approach to modality has been through the ancient Greeks ; but this does not presuppose the Grecian origin of the modal system. Recent research has revealed that Asia Minor may well have been the source of much Pan-Grecian musical learning.⁽¹⁾ Whether we accept this theory or not, we cannot overlook the later infusion of Oriental with European culture through Christianity, the Muslim invasion, the Crusades and the maritime commerce of the Renaissance. The wonders and luxuries that streamed into Europe by caravan and dhow from India, Persia, Arabia and Egypt were mingled with the seeds of wisdom. Science, from the theory of astronomy to the practical compass, is indebted to the East. The substance and poetic exposition of our religion is purely Oriental. The arts and crafts of carpet and tapestry weaving are essentially Egyptian and Asiatic. There is very little reason for cursorily refuting the claims of India, Arabia and Persia to share in the early glory of our ancient modes. Indeed, when we consider the multitude of modes attributed to the ancient Hindu system, or merely the one hundred and thirty-two types⁽²⁾ that still survive in India, we may wonder whether our heritage of a dozen or so from the Greeks must not appear rather insignificant to Oriental eyes.

Seen from an historical viewpoint, our restricted modal system dominated European music for eleven hundred years ; it slowly declined after about 1500, and had almost disappeared by 1700 ; it did not reappear until the mid-nineteenth century.⁽³⁾ To-day a

⁽¹⁾ Dr. H. G. Farmer puts the case concisely in the opening chapters and Appendix I of his 'Historical Facts for the Arabian Musical Influence' (Reeves, London, 1930).

⁽²⁾ A. H. Fox Strangways gives a table of 63 of these in his 'The Music of Hindostan' (Oxford University Press, 1914).

⁽³⁾ There were, of course, exceptional cases of modality, notably Beethoven's *Adagio* "in the Lydian Mode" in his string Quartet in A minor, op. 132.

new viewpoint, largely that of the creative artist, has arisen. It is maintained that the mode never really waned at all, that the major and minor key-system is a part of the wider modality, and that the important but passing fashion for major and minor modes is leading us by logical progression to a neo-modality. The historical perspective is as sound as it is obvious, but the creative artist adds to it the revelation of his considered feelings. It is as though he thought of the modes as a great forest and felt the strength of the ancient trees, of their upward and patient growth, deep-rooted in the soil of centuries. It is his business, not the historian's, to recognize and cherish the best shoots and to prune away the devitalizing suckers.

Although it is a comparatively new idea for Western composers to look to the East for modal inspiration, already the East has responded magnificently. There is small doubt that "never the twain shall meet" is doomed, like all extreme platitudes, to be proved false in practice. The tentative explorations of Debussy and Ravel into Oriental modality have, consciously or unconsciously, been followed up by Vaughan Williams, Manuel de Falla, Goossens and Schoenberg, to mention only a few haphazard. Of course the East can teach the West nothing directly about harmony, since harmony, as we understand it, does not enter into Oriental music at all; but the harmonic possibilities that it can suggest to us by implication are enormous. It is not necessary to take into account the advanced rhythms that the "percussive counterpoint" of an Arabian orchestra displays in order to realize that from Oriental musicians we have at least as much to learn as they from us.

Many of our recent "reforms" are Oriental traditions. Busoni, in his pamphlet 'Entwurf einer neuen Aesthetik der Tonkunst' (1907), advocated certain modal expansions of European music that were already Hindu commonplaces. Even Verdi's *scala enigmatica*,⁽⁴⁾ which astonished the ears of the 1860's when it appeared as *canto fermo* in his 'Ave Maria', is the ancient Hindu mode of Gourī with the dominant sharpened. The basic scale⁽⁵⁾ of Scriabin's seventh Sonata is also Hindu. Sibelius, in his fourth Symphony, freely employs the pure Hindu mode of Kaliān⁽⁶⁾, and the Arabian Asbein⁽⁷⁾ (or Persian Ispahan) scale with the submediant sharpened.

⁽⁴⁾ Verdi's scale was C, D♭, E, F♯, G♯, A♯, B and C in ascent; and C, B, A♯, G♯, F♯, E, D♭ and C in descent.

⁽⁵⁾ C, D♭, E, F♯, A, B♭, C.

⁽⁶⁾ C, D, E, F♯, G, A, B, C.

⁽⁷⁾ A, B♭, C♯, D, E, F, G, A. This mode has been incorrectly described by Rouanet as Zeidan.

It is now common knowledge that the whole-tone scale, the discovery of which has been attributed successively to Debussy, Satie, Rebikov (who used it throughout whole pieces like 'Une Fête' and 'Les Rêves') and even Mozart (who amused himself with it in the sextet called 'A Musical Joke'), is of Chinese origin and of remote antiquity.

It would serve no purpose to persist with such examples, for they are legion. They are the rule rather than the exception of modern music. While it may be true that the use of Oriental modality is not deliberate in the case of every composer, this does not disprove that the general tendency of great musical thought is to aspire eastwards. The latter-century pioneers, Salvador-Daniel⁽⁸⁾ and Félicien David, opened up new vistas of modality by their Arabian researches. Others have done the same in India, Persia and Egypt. Saint-Saëns and Bantock, with their obvious Orientalities, Elgar, with his frequently flattened supertonic and insistence on the augmented fourth, have served a pioneering purpose that in no way detracts from their creative merit. Such men have made it possible for the modern composer to assume the Oriental modal idiom without self-consciousness, almost without awareness of it. Walton, for instance, is probably ignorant of the extent to which his melodic line is influenced by the Eastern conception of tonality. Debussy, on the other hand, who belonged to the pioneering period, was directly stimulated by the Cambodian music he heard at the Paris Exhibition.

The Eastern modal influence should not be confused with the pseudo-Orientalities that Mozart and Beethoven began with their so-called "Turkish" music. Nor should the subsequent Oriental fantasies of lesser men, who patently assumed a "lotus-eyed" outlook, enter into the case. The blackamoor of the eighteenth-century drawing-room and Alma Tadema's illustrated confectionery would be as apposite. It is not until we consider, let us say, the relation of Falla's music to Moorish modality that we find the true Oriental influence. Aural contact with native musicians, such as the writer was once privileged to have in Tangier, is essential to a sympathetic understanding of the subject.⁽⁹⁾ Fortunately it is possible to obtain this experience through the medium of gramophone records.

Despite certain banalities in the style of early exponents, there

⁽⁸⁾ See his 'The Music and Musical Instruments of the Arab', translated by Farmer (Reeves, London, 1914).

⁽⁹⁾ An armchair contact with the musical Moors can be made through Thornton's 'The Voice of Atlas' (Maclehose, London, 1936).

are few who regret the intrusion of the Spanish- and Russo-Oriental modal richness upon the major and minor poverty of the mid-nineteenth century. They brought with them not only tonal freedom, but rhythmic flexibility. The Teutonic tradition, despite the fertility of its first glorious years, required some such new blood to avoid sterility. Yet it was to be expected that Germany, as the leader of European music for nearly two centuries, would be the last to yield to the new influence. England, France and Italy were far quicker than she to meet the influx from the East.

There are some who think that the paths of East and West have met in many more aspects than the purely musical one. Sir S. Radhakrishnan has written that "perhaps, the civilizations of the East, their religions and ethics, may offer us some help in negotiating difficulties that we are up against". Nobody, who has read his illuminating book⁽¹⁰⁾, could doubt that the Hindu mind, at any rate, has a significant contribution to make to our little store of wisdom. It is not surprising that music has been with the van of the movement eastwards. We have grown to accept without wonder the ever-recurring miracle of the artist being fifty years ahead of his time.

When the present writer visited the fringe of the Orient a few years ago, he was distressed to learn that the people, not content with adopting the outward trimmings of our civilization, had gone so far in their emulation as to be in danger of losing interest in their own culture. In 1928 Mustapha Kemal, the Turkish leader, had pronounced his verdict that "European music is far superior to Oriental". By 1934 the Turkish Minister for the Interior had actually prohibited the broadcasting of Oriental music. Consequently, it was almost impossible to hear any native music in Turkey after that date.

It seems, therefore, that the Western musician will have to look to the Far East to find brothers of a wider modal art. When he has found them, let all go forward as artists, each pursuing his independent course, yet, in spirit and aspiration, together.

⁽¹⁰⁾ 'Eastern Religions and Western Thought' (Oxford University Press, 1940).

A BEST-SELLER IN OPERA

BY EDWARD J. DENT

WHEN the management of Sadler's Wells asked me some nine months ago to make a new translation of Flotow's 'Martha', it was only with considerable reluctance that I agreed to do so. I deplored the projected revival of the opera; but Sadler's Wells cannot continue its existence unless it draws full houses every night of the week, and I was told that 'Martha' would certainly ensure that, as often as it was performed.

Let me confess at once that I have never seen 'Martha' on the stage in any country or in any language. I once saw Flotow's other popular opera 'Alessandro Stradella' at Dresden, some forty years ago, I think; but I can only remember that I found it desperately dull. Recently I began to read the score of it in a library, but could not bring myself to do more than glance at occasional pages. But if one wishes to know an opera intimately there is no method like that of translating it from beginning to end; and even in the case of operas which I had seen dozens of times and which I thought I knew pretty well the toil of translation has taught me much that I did not realize before.

One thing a translator inevitably learns is that the worse an opera is, the harder it is to translate. Those which gave me the greatest satisfaction, as far as I remember, have been 'Eugene Oniegin' and 'Les Troyens', for in both cases there was a libretto of real literary merit treated by the composer with sincerity and respect. The most infuriating to translate are those operas in which the composer has aimed at nothing but popular success, for they do nothing but pursue a well-worn convention, both in words and in music, and one may be sure that the composer will very often entirely disregard the metre of the libretto, repeating lines over and over again, and altering them each time in order to make them fit into the orthodox scheme of a pseudo-classical finale.

After I had completed the translation of 'Martha', it occurred to me that an analysis of the opera, both words and music, might be interesting and perhaps entertaining as well, as a study of operatic construction and the methods of ensuring popularity. I need not

waste much space on the life of Flotow or the history of the opera ; the reader can look up Flotow in any dictionary of music. He was born in 1812 as the son of an impoverished country squire ; although originally intended for a diplomatic career, he was allowed to devote himself to music and sent to Paris to study it. He spent most of his early life there and went much into smart society ; it is however greatly to his credit that he discovered the German Jew Offenbach when quite a stranger in Paris, and made a firm friend of him. Flotow wrote a large number of operas, but only two are remembered to-day, 'Alessandro Stradella', first produced at Hamburg, on December 30th 1844, and 'Martha', first produced at Vienna, on September 25th 1847. Flotow did not die until 1883, but it is clear from the descriptions of his funeral that he was remembered only as the composer of 'Martha'. 'Martha', as is well known, makes great use of the Irish folksong known since the publication of Thomas Moore's 'Irish Melodies' as 'The Last Rose of Summer' ; and from the memoir of Flotow written by his third wife it appears that not only she, but most of the German musicians of the time, believed Flotow himself to have been the composer of it. It was sung, to appropriate German words, at his graveside.

R. A. Streatfeild in his book 'The Opera' says of 'Martha' :

Inferior even to the slightest of the minor composers of the romantic school was Flotow, whose 'Martha' nevertheless has survived to our time, while hundreds of works far superior in every way have perished irretrievably. Flotow was a German by birth, but his music is merely a feeble imitation of the popular Italianisms of the day. . . . Flotow had a certain gift of melody, and the music of 'Martha' has the merit of a rather trivial tunefulness, but the score is absolutely devoid of any real musical interest, and the fact that performances of such a work as 'Martha' are still popular in London gives an unfortunate impression of the standard of musical taste prevailing in England.

Mr. Frank Howes in 'A Key to Opera', first published last year :

Flotow's 'Martha', which has only just vanished from the English repertory, is described by Kobbé as of world-wide popularity, and he accordingly devotes to it thirteen pages of commentary and quotation of its dialogue. He deliberately classifies it as a French opera for its "elegance" and "grace", though it was first produced in Vienna and Flotow was a German by birth ; Flotow, however, spent a good deal of time in Paris and got his musical training there. . . . 'The Last Rose of Summer' is incorporated into the second act, and a tenor aria, 'M'appari,' has a wide currency. The situations are "stagey" and the music facile, so that to present taste it appears as just the kind of work which has given opera a bad name.

It has however been filmed in recent years and so obtained a new currency.

Of the popularity of 'Martha' there can be no doubt. It was sung in London in Italian in the great days of Grisi and Mario, and it was a regular favourite with English companies. It was given at the Old Vic in 1914, but not since then either at the Vic or at Sadler's Wells; but it was performed in the summer of 1940 by the students of the Royal Academy of Music, so it is presumably considered to be of educational value. It is still a sure draw for popular audiences in Germany.

Mr. Kobbé (whose book I have not read) was quite right in classifying 'Martha' as a French opera, for it is closely modelled on the plan of Auber's comic operas, but it falls far short of Auber in "elegance and grace", and its chief quality, as a friend of mine recently observed to me, is a certain "fleshy coyness" which of course is pre-eminently Viennese. I note that Mr. Howes quotes the favourite tenor aria by the words of the Italian version, although the original words are German. Corney Grain, whom elderly readers will remember as a delightful "entertainer at the pianoforte" in late Victorian days, tells an amusing story about it in his autobiography. Some frequenter of the Opera gallery mentioned to him, in the course of conversation, that his favourite tune was 'Emma Parry'. Corney Grain was completely mystified and asked him to sing it; he then at once recognized the tenor aria from 'Martha', "M'appari". Pronounce the M separately and the following word with the accent on the second syllable, and you get it. In the French version, according to the full score in Mr. Paul Hirsch's library, it was called the 'Air des larmes'.

When an English singer sings a song in Italian at a concert, one can be pretty certain that he does so primarily to show off his voice; those who sing in French or German seem to take a different attitude to music. The difference can be neatly observed in those singers, male or female, who sing the well-known songs from 'Die Zauberflöte' in their Italian versions, for 'Die Zauberflöte' has not been put on the stage in Italian in this country since about 1890. So it is with "M'appari"; one cannot imagine any English tenor singing it in English *at a concert* even if he has sung it in English in the theatre, and one cannot imagine him singing it in German at all, unless he has actually been an opera-singer in Germany.

'Martha' was made with no other object than to please a popular audience; even if its first audience of 1847 was largely aristocratic, it was a Viennese audience, and one that sought amusement and nothing else in the theatre. One must remember that in the first

half of the nineteenth century the operatic repertory in the German theatres was mainly French and Italian. It must not be supposed that the famous classical operas were popular in German theatres in those days. At Sadler's Wells Mozart is as good a draw as Mascagni; but just as Martini was preferred to him in his own day, so in the 1830's was Marschner. It would be hardly possible to make a list of a dozen German operas which were as popular in 1847 as 'Faust' and 'Carmen' are now all over the world. Lortzing had begun a successful career ten years earlier with 'Czar und Zimmermann'; Nicolai's 'Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor' did not come out until 1849, and the composer died in that very year. There were a vast number of German opera composers, but their works never achieved lasting popularity or even fame—such fame, I mean, as is conferred by a mention in history-books. Spohr, Weber, Marschner, Lortzing: their names are celebrated, and they certainly had a measure of success, but these four, however great they may be as historic figures, are not enough to make a practical repertory. It is only when we realize the true condition of the German repertory at that date that we can fully understand Wagner's fury against anything that bore the degraded name of *Oper*; one must write it in its bastard German form, for the word *opera* comes so easily to English and French ears (having been naturalized in both countries about 1650) that we find "music-drama" rather ridiculous.

Flotow's librettist, Friedrich Wilhelm Riese, who wrote under the name of W. Friedrich, was no more Viennese than Flotow himself. Like Flotow, he was a North German who lived in Paris, and that was the nearest thing to being a genuine Viennese. Their models for comic opera were Scribe and Auber. Auber is so unfamiliar to most English musicians of to-day that they hardly realize his immense influence on the nineteenth century, both in Germany and in England. Neither the Germans nor the English quite succeeded in imitating his characteristic turns of melody or his elegance of orchestration, but they all adopted his principles of construction and certain technical habits which are curiously strange to us in these days. As a typical example I would cite the invariable practice, in choral numbers, of giving the main melody to the first violins, while the chorus—soldiers, gypsies or whatever they are—sing nothing but harmonic filling-up parts, as if they were trombones or instruments of a military band. It is only quite rarely that the highest chorus part, whether soprano or tenor, has an outstanding tune. The reason is fairly obvious: chorus singers were ignorant people who learned their music by ear. They were also very badly

paid ; one could not expect from them either the musical intelligence or the industrious rehearsal necessary for the choral rendering of 'Die Meistersinger'. And it may be noted that Handel in his oratorios and anthems does exactly the same thing, unless he writes a fugue ; the chorus parts are quite uninteresting and all the vital expression is in the orchestra, though Handel, being something more than just a great composer, suddenly gives the sopranos a tune, and a very obvious one, at the very end of his number, with an effect that can only be called sublime. Auber and Flotow and the rest do not manage to bring this off.

Riese's libretto for 'Martha' is highly praised by the editor of the Reclam edition, as well as by other German writers. Riese had had a large experience of translating and "arranging" French comedies ; it is worth noting that the only two operas by Flotow which survived were those for which Riese supplied the words. He was certainly most expert in versification and the ingenious management of rhyme ; he is further praised for his happy characterization of the *dramatis personae* and his skill in planning effective musical situations. As far as an English reader can judge, his verses are remarkably smooth and easy to sing ; and it is by no means every German librettist of whom that can be said. But smooth and fluent versification is not everything in an opera libretto, and when it comes to translating Riese, one finds that the poet only too often sacrifices sense and common sense to virtuosity of rhyme and metre.

The story of 'Martha' is said to be traceable to a ballet of the seventeenth century, 'Le Ballet des chambrières à louer'. So far I have been unable to trace this ballet ; it is not mentioned in H. Prunières's 'Le Ballet de cour'.

Its immediate source was a ballet produced at Paris in 1844, called 'Lady Harriette ou La Servante de Greenwich', of which Flotow wrote the first act, while the second and third were written (to save time) by Robert Burgmüller and Edouard Deldevez. The author of the scenario was J. H. V. de Saint-Georges, who was associated with Alfred Bunn, the author of 'The Bohemian Girl', in some kind of operatic activity. This ballet is said to have been derived from a French *vaudeville*, 'La Comtesse d'Egmont'. Romantic opera always liked to place its scene in a remote and strange country ; the story of Lady Harriet takes place in a very imaginary and operatic England. In 'Martha' Lady Harriet Durham, a maid of honour to Queen Anne, is bored with life and suddenly decides to go with her confidante Nancy to a fair at Richmond, where country girls are hired as servants by farmers. Lady Harriet and Nancy, being in peasant dress, attract the attention

of two young farmers, Lionel and Plunkett (he is called Plumkett in the original, for a reason which shall be explained later) ; they allow themselves to be engaged by them as servants, and then think to make off as if the whole affair were merely a jest. They find, however, that they have entered on a legal contract for a year's service and are very unwillingly haled off to the farm, after having been derided by the populace. At the farm they refuse to do any work, and Nancy amuses herself by breaking the crockery. Lionel begins to fall in love with Lady Harriet and asks her to sing ; she complies with ' The Last Rose of Summer ', to a German translation of Moore's words. After the men have gone to bed the ladies are rescued by Lady Harriet's cousin Lord Tristan Mickleford (generally called Sir Tristram in English versions). In the third act both ladies are unexpectedly recognized, while out hunting, by their farmer employers, who at once claim their right to their services ; but the ladies, to save their reputations, set the whole hunting-field against the farmers. Plunkett retires discomfited, and Lionel is taken off either to prison or to a lunatic asylum. By the fourth act Lady Harriet has repented of her behaviour ; a mysterious ring belonging to Lionel has been shown by her to the queen, with the result that he is discovered to be the son of the late long-banished Earl of Derby. She comes to the farmhouse to tell him this and to offer him her hand ; he rejects it with scorn and appears to be now genuinely insane. As she is unable to cure him by singing yet another verse of ' The Last Rose ', she hits on the idea of rigging up a reproduction of the fair ; Plunkett brings him to it, and when he sees Lady Harriet again in peasant dress, he regains his reason and the opera comes to a happy end with yet another verse of ' The Last Rose.' Having once borrowed ' The Last Rose ', Flotow makes the most of it.

One merit, if it is a merit—and most people will probably say at once that it must be—of Riese's libretto is that he manages to tell his story without the necessity of spoken dialogue. ' Martha ' is in fact the very first German comic opera in which there is no speaking. To call the music continuous would be going a little too far ; it is divided into separate numbers, and so far from being linked up by musical transitions they are very carefully separated so that the audience can be in no doubt as to when to applaud. Germans have always hated *recitativo secco*, and indeed it is only in very recent years that they have re-introduced it in Mozart's ' Figaro ' and ' Don Giovanni ' ; most German singers have the greatest difficulty in dealing with it. In ' Martha ' even accompanied recitative is reduced to the barest minimum, and as far as possible the story is told in the course of songs, duets and other metrical numbers.

As to character-drawing, the whole libretto is so utterly conventional that the persons in the play are no more than singers of well-accepted categories. Lady Harriet is a French *coloratura* soprano, with a considerable tendency towards the sentimental. Nancy is the typical *soubrette*; she is also a contralto of a type that is out of fashion nowadays. She belongs to the same class as Rosina in 'The Barber of Seville' and characters in other operas by Rossini—a contralto who can sing *coloratura* and act with grace and vivacity. Contraltos of the present day are still trained on Victorian oratorio lines; even Sullivan seems to have expected his contraltos to be what Plunket Greene used to call "cavernous", for they are always the elderly ladies of the piece. Lionel is a *tenore di grazia*; he is the one character in the play who is systematically sentimental all the way through. There are barely half a dozen words for him that might lead one to suppose he had a sense of humour. Sir Tristram and Plunkett are comic baritone and bass, the former more of a *buffo* in personality, the latter tending more to the traditional *buffo* in the songs he has to sing.

It seems to have been a universally accepted convention in all musical countries during the first half of the nineteenth century, and perhaps longer, that vocal music was divided into recitative and aria: that in recitative the sense was the first consideration and the music secondary, while in aria the music was supreme and the accentuation or declamation of words negligible. Composers vary in their treatment of this convention, as one might expect; but the range of variation is not extensive. That is why the famous "Sie liebt ihn" in 'Euryanthe', occurring in the middle of an aria, hits us with such terrific force; it stands out in its naked simplicity and truth in the midst of a wide area of pure convention. This convention being accepted, it was natural that librettists should make no attempt to write sense in their arias or great ensembles, because they knew that not a word would come through on the stage; and for the same reason the composers treated the words as nonsense, hacked them about as convenient, and sought to make their effects by purely musical means of the crudest type, like the "military band" ensemble.

Such an opera as 'Martha' can thus be thrown on to the stage (as it seems to have been in most German theatres) with hardly any rehearsal, and with no attempt at "production" in the modern sense. Indeed, the whole idea of "production", applied to opera, is a thing of very recent growth indeed. Modern times insist on a certain standard of production, although Covent Garden has shown us that some audiences are still completely indifferent to it. For a

revival to-day at Sadler's Wells 'Martha' must be made something more than a concert in costume. No doubt there have been great singers in the past who infused character and personality into every part that they sang ; but they seem to have gone each his or her own way about it, with little or no sense of team-work. The characters in 'Martha' have got to be made more or less credible, and when it comes to detail, that is a matter of some difficulty. But it is not impossible, and a new translation can here be of some service, especially if it is made, as mine has been, in close and constant co-operation with the producer, long before any rehearsals have begun.

Riese placed his story in the reign of Queen Anne. I have wondered whether he had any idea of when Queen Anne occupied the throne, or whether he had any direct acquaintance with England at all. To judge from some of the songs and other numbers, the opera might have been laid in the days of Queen Boadicea, or at any rate in the later Middle Ages. Nancy, talking to Lady Harriet about her possible lovers, speaks of knights riding to the tourney in armour. Had Herr Riese read in some newspaper about the Eglinton tournament of 1839 ? In the hunting choruses of Act III there is no mention whatever of either horse or hound ; the deer is named once, but it is left quite uncertain whether he is to be hunted with nets, guns or spears. The unfortunate translator might well add forks and hope.

The first scene opens in Lady Harriet's boudoir ; it appears to be her bedroom or dressing-room, for a toilet table is expressly mentioned. Lady H. is surrounded by a chorus of maids, and attended by the faithful Nancy. The scene, as the producer observed to me, is just like the second act of 'Aida'. How many maids would it take to dress Lady Harriet, and what exactly is the social position of Nancy ? She cannot be a maid, for she is almost on equal terms with Sir Tristram ; in the hunting scene she sings a song to the chorus of hunting ladies, and is in a position to call for their assistance ; yet in the end she is perfectly happy to marry Mr. Plunkett, who is nothing more than a farmer. How wise those people are who prefer their operas in Italian ! You see what difficulties arise when you ask to hear the words in plain English.

Riese's only idea of realism is to lay on the local colour as thick as possible. In 'Alessandro Stradella' he does this by dragging in Italian words, proper names and all sorts—*Italia, Roma, Campagna, tarantella, macaroni*, &c. With English his audience evidently could not be so familiar ; but at any rate they could understand *Lord* and *Lady*, even if the well-known difficulties of English titles were ignored.

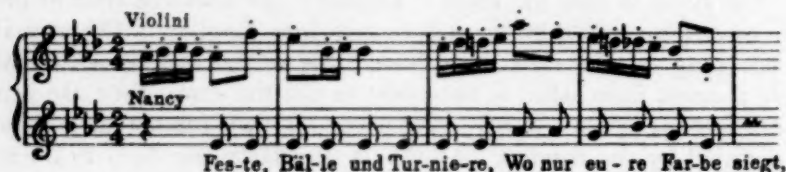
Plum-pudding and *Porter-bier* also come in useful for him ; hence probably the curious spelling of a name generally written *Plunket*.

The result is that the more "English" the librettist tries to be, the more impossible he is to translate into English. The actual words sung by the characters have little or no differentiation of style ; apart from what is necessary to tell the story, they are just operatic convention—hardly even that, for very often their choice is dictated by the rhymes. All that a translator can do is to try to imagine for himself what each character *might* be, and then try to find the words appropriate to the intensification of that character.

Lady Harriet is really no more than a prima donna, but one can interpret her as a very foolish young lady who gives way to every chance impulse on the spur of the moment without ever considering the possible consequences. Flotow saves the translator a good deal of trouble by making her sing all her more elaborate phrases to *Ah* and nothing else ; Nancy very often does the same. Sir Tristram is more clearly indicated : he is an elderly beau, a court official with the very strongest sense of propriety. Unfortunately he has a very small part ; he is never allowed an aria to himself, but only enters into ensembles, and as he has to sing the bass or the baritone in block harmony, it follows that he can be characterized only in passages of a more or less recitative-like type. Lionel is really the most consistently drawn of all the characters, for from beginning to end he is a tenor and nothing else, so much so that it would really be quite a mistake to give the part to a young and good-looking singer who had a talent for acting ; the least attempt to make Lionel realistic would completely give away his absurdity. Plunkett could be made human if the author and composer had not treated him almost exclusively as a conventional *buffo* whose chief duty is to sing duets with the *soubrette* and ultimately marry her.

The first scene is mere exposition, and contains nothing of importance. There is a characteristic duet between Lady Harriet and Nancy ; it has charm and a certain French neatness in its more melodic parts. When any character has words to say which contribute to the drama, Flotow's (and Auber's) technique is to start a conspicuous figure in the orchestra and let the singer's melody be subordinate. The old Italian composers would have made this plain recitative ; the French and Germans try to evade recitative and keep the "music" going ; but both words and melody suffer, because what is sung is something not clear enough for recitative and not melodious enough for aria. The French language apparently tolerates this, but the monotonous rhythms are the ruin of

English, and they are not well suited even to German. Here is a typical example :



The same happens when Sir Tristram enters ; he has no chance of being funny, except in by-play when not singing, and the trio has two sections in which Lady Harriet sings *coloratura* to chords in block harmony supplied by Nancy and Sir Tristram.

The market scene at Richmond has real vitality ; the chorus starts off with a good tune that everybody gets hold of at once, and it is repeated several times. As soon as Lionel and Plunkett enter, they have to explain a vast number of things : that they are farmers, living together under the will of Plunkett's deceased mother, that Lionel (who on the first mention of the word "mother" goes off into a burst of sentimentality) was not her son, but a foster-child, brought by a mysterious gentleman in distressed circumstances who came to live with them, and on his deathbed gave Lionel a ring which he might take to the queen, if in dire straits—but all the same papa hoped he wouldn't—and lastly, that they have come to the fair to hire two maids. It is much to Riese's credit that he gets all this through to the audience in a wonderfully short time. Here we see the practical convenience of the stock French *romance* or ballad, the first duty of which was to tell a story about something that happened before the play begins. In the course of less than a hundred years that brief ballad had disintegrated into Wotan's notorious *Erzählung*.

Flotow can write quite a pretty tune for Lionel ; but what fills a modern opera-goer with horror are his instrumental interludes. They are utterly shameless ; they pre-suppose applause on the part of the audience, and tell it when to stop clapping and listen for the next verse.

After a well-made choral scene in which the maids are auctioned (apparently) by the *Richter*, generally translated "Sheriff"—I prefer to call him the "Mayor"—comes the next vocal attraction, a quartet. It is obviously the prototype of all Sullivan's popular vocal quartets, including the gavotte rhythm, so characteristic of Sullivan. Typical of Sullivan, too, rather than of Auber, is the very orthodox Mendelssohnian four-part harmony ; if it were not for a too widely

extended compass, it might almost have found its way into our churches as a favourite hymn tune. Observe how neatly Flotow presents it first in the orchestra :



Behind this the voices have little conversations ; then the tune is broken off unfinished, and a few preparatory bars lead into the real vocal quartet. The sentiments of the ladies are quite different from those of the men, but they must all sing the same block harmony together ; there is not the least suggestion of contrast or of counterpoint. Next comes a bright little dialogue on the usual lines—an Auberish tune in the violins, while the voices have little more than monotone. The men engage the two girls as servants ; and then we repeat the whole quartet, just as if it was the *da capo* of an aria by Handel. The words, as well as the music, are the same, and as they mean very little, it does not matter in the least. In my new version I have tried to make the words more pointed, and have written an entirely new set of words for the repetition, as the dramatic situation is entirely changed after the agreement made in the dialogue. I shall probably be told that I have thrown double labour on the unfortunate singers.

The second act has to be filled out with as much stuffing as possible. First another quartet ; in fact the whole act is a series of block-harmony quartets, separated by conversations to music, and at one moment by the great duet for Lionel and Lady Harriet in which she sings 'The Last Rose'. It was the age of Mendelssohn and the male-voice part-song in Germany ; and the male-voice part-song popularized by Weber had begun to be imitated by the part-song for mixed voices. It was still in what we should now call a very elementary stage ; it had been popular in England still earlier as the *glee*, especially the theatrical type of glee to be found in Bishop's operas, and it was just about this time—a few years earlier, to be accurate (1844)—that Mr. Hullah started his singing-classes, Mr. Alfred Novello his 'Musical Times and Singing-Class Circular' and R. L. de Pearsall, Esquire, of Willsbridge, as he was always called, composed 'O who will o'er the downs with me?' And while we are on the subject of dates, let us note, before 'Martha'

of 1847, 'The Bohemian Girl', 1843, 'Tannhäuser', October 1845, and 'Maritana', November of the same year.

The duet between Lady Harriet and Lionel is worked up into a big *scena*. Its sentimentality can be pardoned; what is revolting is the abuse of the *fortissimo*, both of the singers' high notes and, worse still, of the orchestra. It is indeed this sort of thing, as Mr. Howes says, which gives opera a bad name, for the composer says plainly to the audience that he has no real interest in the stage characters or the story, but only wants to present favourite singers to make a noise and rouse the audience to paroxysms of applause. In the case of "Di quella pira" in 'Il Trovatore' the intention is doubtless just the same, but the song comes at the end of an act, as the climax of a very dramatic situation, and the noisiness of the song is appropriate to the story; the song is exactly the right thing at the right moment, and that is what makes 'Trovatore' an operatic masterpiece. In the duet in 'Martha' the emotional situation, if sincere, would call for a shuddering *pianissimo* rather than a pompously triumphal mazurka.

Act III is almost all in 6-8 time—a favourite rhythm of the romantic composers, especially in choruses, for it will do equally well for soldiers, huntsmen, peasants, gypsies, Neapolitan fishermen and Venetian gondoliers. We start off with Mr. Plunkett's song in praise of *Porter-bier*, and perhaps it was appropriate to the moment, for only twelve years before Malibran had arranged with Bunn to have a pint of porter served up to her through a trap in the middle of an exhausting *scena* in Balfe's 'Maid of Artois'. In this act again the story is padded out with unnecessary choruses and songs. That was indeed the fundamental principle with opera-composers of those days, and it is characteristic of Puccini as well, despite his invariable search for a "strong" story; the operatic stage did not want a great deal of action, because it was easier to please the audience and show off the singers in conventional "numbers" dragged in without reference to the story. In the Handelian opera the singers sang songs to express the emotions arising out of the drama; a later age conceived the play with music, in which (as often in Shakespeare) some performance of music on the stage was introduced, definitely as a performance of music, a serenade or a religious rite, for instance. Consequently librettists of the nineteenth century often thought that what they had to do was to find a story which would allow them to drag in the maximum number of such musical performances, that is, songs or choruses that even in an ordinary spoken play would still be *pieces of music*.

The great moment of Act III is the quintet in the middle of the

finale ; it is a perfect example of the absurd operatic ensemble in which all the characters stand in a row and shout at the top of their voices. How important Flotow thought it is shown by the fact that it forms the climax of the overture as well. Its first sentimental tune is appropriate enough : it is sung as a solo by Lionel. But it is immediately snatched up by the whole company, soloists and chorus, *fortissimo*, with an accompaniment for the full orchestra with trombones and all, and a perpetual scale figure which anticipates the technique of the late-Victorian street-pianofortes.

There is another grand operatic duet between Lady Harriet and Lionel in Act IV which judged by its own standards is not without merit ; it is followed immediately by a very conventional *buffo* duet for Nancy and Plunkett. The convention goes back to 'La serva padrona' and farther still ; it was the sort of thing that old Scarlatti used to make very amusing in his *intermezzi*. It is curious to note how the *buffo* convention survived almost down to our own time ; there are plenty of examples in Sullivan.

Sullivan was the editor of the vocal score of 'Martha' with Italian words issued in Boosey's "Royal Edition" of operas ; so there can be no doubt that he knew 'Martha' well. The Boosey edition indeed contains an extra song for Nancy which is not in French or German editions ; it is evidently written to show off a heavy contralto and is quite inappropriate both to the dramatic situation and to the personality of Nancy. From the style, I am inclined to suspect that it was composed by Sullivan himself. The final chorus, in which the sham fair is built up, is remarkably like Sullivan :



What is it that has made the world-wide success of 'Martha' ? I do not think it is inferior to the comic operas of Lortzing and Nicolai, which are always talked of by the learned (who generally take their ideas from German books) as if they had some claim to immortality ; but it is very poor stuff—and so are Lortzing and Nicolai—compared with 'Fra Diavolo' and some other operas by Auber, or even with Hérold's 'Zampa', a deliberate imitation of 'Fra Diavolo', but by no means a bad one. I think the real answer to my question lies in the gradual tendency of the mid-Victorian period to turn all operas into Italian grand operas, if they could possibly stand it. We know how this was done with 'Le nozze di

'Figaro' and 'Don Giovanni'; I myself saw 'Don Giovanni' at Paris, about 1898, as a grand spectacular opera in five acts on the scale of 'Aida'. Almost any Italian opera could be treated in this way, because the *secco* recitative, if there was any, could always be orchestrated, and perhaps shortened. Many French and German operas, as we know, had their dialogue turned into accompanied recitative—'Freischütz' by Berlioz, 'Oberon' by Sir Julius Benedict, 'Fidelio' by Balfe, 'Carmen' by Guiraud. 'Martha' had the immense advantage of not requiring recitatives; it could go into Italian almost unaltered, and when it had once been sung by Grisi and Mario at Her Majesty's Theatre, its popularity was assured. It had two features, the market chorus and "M'appari"; and nearly all the famous operas that have survived from the Grisi-Mario days have had one song on which their success turned, the one song which the connoisseurs went to listen to, if they heard nothing else: "Bel raggio lusinghier", "Voi che sapete", "Una voce poco fa", "Batti, batti", "Casta diva", "Spirto gentil", "La donna è mobile", "Parigi, o cara", "Salve dimora". Italian opera was so grand and so expensive that people seem to have forgotten that it could ever have been comic. You might perhaps be allowed to laugh at Lablache in a *buffo* part, but it was inconceivable that one should laugh at a lady, and from Pasta onwards, the nineteenth century was the age of the prima donna. Nor could one laugh at a tenor, until the present age arose in which one can laugh at anything, and there are even opera-goers who find anything laughable if a tenor sings it.

One of the great things which Sadler's Wells has achieved is that it has gradually trained its audiences to enjoy classical comic opera. 'Figaro' fills the house, and there is a ripple of laughter all the way through—the light laughter which encourages the singers and does not disturb them. At Sadler's Wells people have learned to laugh rather than to applaud in the course of an act. If the new 'Martha' is to fill the house, it must fill it with laughter of this kind.

POSTSCRIPT

Since this article went into type I have discovered a possible ancestor of 'Martha' in 'The Village Opera,' London, 1729. According to 'The Companion to the Playhouse' (1764) this was produced in 1728. "This is one of the many imitations of the *Beggar's Opera*, and made its Appearance the Season after that Piece. It is far from being devoid of Merit, yet met with very indifferent Success". The author was Charles Johnson, about

whom Pope, in a note to 'The Dunciad', quoted the following observations :

Charles Johnson, famous for writing a Play every Year, and for being at *Button's* every Day. He had probably thriven better in his Vocation had he been a small Matter leaner ; he may be justly called a Martyr to Obesity, and be said to have fallen a Victim to the Rotundity of his Parts.

In this opera young Freeman, the hero, is to be married against his will to Rosella, daughter of Sir Nicholas Wiseacre, but preferring her maid Betty, he gets himself engaged as gardener to Sir Nicholas under the name of Colin. Betty eventually proves to be also of gentle birth, having disguised herself as a maid to escape a similar unwelcome marriage. At the end of Act I there is a scene representing a fair exactly similar to that in 'Martha' ; it is amusing, but has nothing whatever to do with the action of the play. A few extracts will show the close resemblance to the analogous scene in Flotow's opera.

SCENE III. *the Village.*

A Country Mop, or Statute, that is, a Sort of a Fair where Servants are hired ; little Sheds with Toys, &c. among the Trees upon a Green ; Maids and Men ranged on each Side to be hired. Two Gentlemen in Riding-Habits examining the Servants.

Enter Sir Nicholas and Lady Wiseacre.

Sir Nich. So, so ! the Boys and the Girls have all ranged themselves here already, I see, in exact Order. Come, Wife, let us take a Turn thro' the Mop, and survey them ; I think I shall have occasion for some new Domesticks, shortly ; come along.

1 *Gent.* Are these Servants, say you ? and to be hired ?

2 *Gent.* Ay ; once a Year they meet here in this manner. This must have an odd Appearance to People not used to this manner of taking Servants.

[Here follow conversations between the gentlemen and the maids and another with a cheating steward, after which the First Gentleman says :]

1 *Gent.* Hark, the Fiddles ! Let us attend this out-of-the-way Consort.

AIR XIII. *In our Country, &c.*

Dairy-M. *I milk your Cows ;*

House-M. *I clean your House ;*

Laundry-M. *Your Linnen I wash, and I whiten ;*

Husbandm. *I Plow and I Mow ;*

Hind. *I Reap and I Sow ;*

Gard. *If your Garden you take Delight in,
I Prune and I Plant.*

Chor.

*What Servant you want
For your Field, or House, or Dairy ;
If you chuse here, you need not fear,
That you'll ever, you'll ever miscarry.*

AIR XV. The Abbot of Canterbury.

Chorus
of all.

*Of all Servants here's Choice, pretty Maids, jolly Boys,
Take ; and use us, and prove, a whole Month for your Love,
How much we deserve, and how well we can serve ;
We ne'er from our Faith, or our Duty will swerve.*

The End of the First Act.

GEORGE W. HOLT

' Music & Letters ' has lost a good friend in George Holt, its Manager for twenty-one years, who died in his sleep on January 17th. Fate dealt him a poor hand : besides ill-health which prostrated him for weeks now and again, he had serious domestic trouble, and, as he never courted her, fortune passed him by. He managed also at one time the ' Army and Navy Gazette ', but was as innocent of the military as of the musical art, though he found scope for both instincts in chess, where modesty in victory was equalled by good temper in defeat. He imitated a famous character in fiction by " coming out strong " in adversity and finding there alone any " credit in being jolly ". One has not known a more unselfish man.

A. H. F. S.

This tribute paid by the Founder and first Editor of ' Music & Letters ' can only be endorsed without qualification by his successor. If anything, George Holt did even more to deserve it during the last years, when there were greater obstacles of two kinds to be surmounted : his health had grown even more uncertain, and the existence of this magazine was threatened by the outbreak of war. In the autumn of 1939 it looked all too difficult to carry on, and without the offer of his continued help, always freely and generously given, however ill he could afford to do so, it would have seemed impossible. If it remains possible now, it will be good to think how much that would have pleased him.

E. B.

KODÁLY AND THE CHRISTIAN EPIC

BY W. H. MELLERS

THAT Central Europe should have produced three out of the dozen (generously speaking) twentieth-century composers who have outstandingly original genius is not as surprising as might superficially appear. Janáček, Bartók and Kodály possess various distinctive traits of sensibility which we may properly call contemporary; yet they all derive something of their power from the fact that they were nurtured in countries in which a tradition of popular music—folk-music as a manifestation of a way of living—was still a living actuality, rather than a matter for antiquarian research. Janáček and Bartók left the folk idiom far behind—Janáček in his increasingly personal, rhythmically complex idiom based on the flexibilities of speech, Bartók in his elaboration of a technique derived first from a rhythmic conception of dissonance and later from an extension of the eighteenth-century melodic conception, combined with a feeling for the line-drawing of Asiatic music. But for all their originality, their nervous intensity, their isolation—all the qualities we sum up as their contemporaneity—one feels that they could not have been composers of so urgent a purpose if they had not profited by a unique combination of circumstances. However personal their idiom, their impetus for creation came from a source that was at once deeper and more far-reaching.

Of the three composers Kodály is undoubtedly the smallest and the simplest. In his work contemporaneity of sensibility has not often sought a violent outlet, but is implicit in a certain meditative introspection, a turning-inwards which is nostalgic in origin, so that one is not surprised to discover that his *harmonic* idiom, with its tranquil sevenths and ninths, has some kinship with that of Debussy. But his introspection is saved from over-subjectivity by the traditional folk-sense that gives to his melodies a distinctive ripeness and soaring plasticity of contour. His melody, a natural utterance of the human singing voice, with its rhythms and inflexions moulded by the Hungarian language, has therefore much of the modal suppleness of folksong, often with a pentatonic foundation; and it may be

examined in its simplest and perhaps most satisfying form in his early songs Op. 6 and Op. 14, particularly the 'Fragment of a Letter to a Friend'. The lines are passionately direct and, despite the delicate sophistication of the comparatively static (Debussyan) harmonic underlying, almost naïve, but although they do not attempt to express obscure or difficult states of feeling their lyrical sweep is so lithe and warm and human that it is like a significant bodily movement, tender and intense as a woman nursing her child. These songs seem to be some of the most beautiful vocal music of our time, and they contain the essence of Kodály's talent. All his representative work is vocally and lyrically conceived; in the instrumental works, particularly the piano pieces and string quartets, the folk inflexions tend to degenerate into perfunctory and unconvincing rhapsody, the sevenths and ninths to become precious in a sense that is almost dilettante.

Depending as it does on this dichotomy between the spontaneous nostalgia of the vocal and "modal" lyricism of folk speech and the comparative sophistication of a harmonic dialect, Kodály's music is necessarily limited in scope and he cannot, like Bartók, hope to create a technique which may play a part in the evolution of European music in the future. But it is not by any means limited to successes of the type defined by the early songs, and perhaps his most important works are those which, similarly conceived in a vocal and lyrical manner, and equally direct in their sensibility, are executed in more epic proportions, being associated with the native, "popular" aspects of the Christian religion. Such works are the 'Psalmus Hungaricus' and the 'Budavári Te Deum'. The first has been several times performed in this country and is recognized as a masterpiece; the second is little known and, with reference to the case I have been making out about Kodály's representative significance, perhaps more interesting, and this is why I want to consider it in some detail.

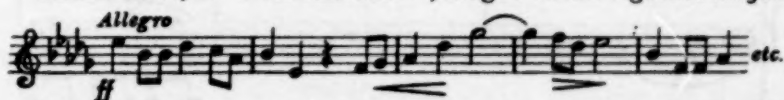
Conceived for soloists, chorus and full orchestra, the 'Te Deum' opens with an imposing fanfare and a kind of rhetorical introduction in which the choir participates. The basis of the method is exemplified in the "tibi omnes" section:



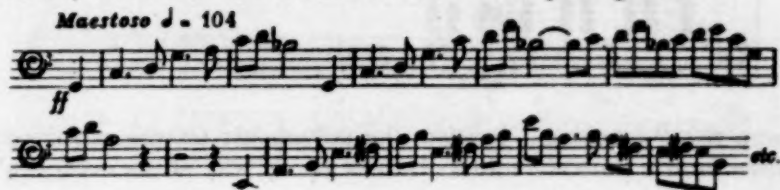


where the extremely simple harmonic scheme is the result of the lines moulded in terms of the human voice, producing a juxtaposition of *harmonically* unrelated concords similar to that of the more chromatic writing of the sixteenth century. Although Kodály modifies this technique to the extent of introducing occasionally his characteristic sevenths and ninths, the method remains the same ; it is merely that these chords have become part of his stock of concords. Kodály's harmonies in his big vocal works are never esoteric in effect but singularly simple in accordance with the soaring sweep of the lines. This is particularly noticeable in the insistence on the dominant ninth during the building-up of the big climax, achieved by a beautifully suave movement in the parts, which concludes the first section on the word "Sabaoth" ; and such melodic and harmonic traits are the technical representation of Kodály's peculiarly sanguine blend of sweetness with virility.

Then follows, at "Plenisunt coeli", a fugue on this vigorous subject :



in which the important interval is the rising or falling fourth. The first and second violins interject a more agile version of the theme, treated in free canon ; and the tonal feeling, with the transitions still very flexible, might be said to tend towards a transposed Dorian. (The distrust of the leading note is typical of almost all Kodály's music.) After a big climax based on an augmentation of the rising fourth motif, the fugue merges at "Te martyrurum" into a section which alternates between tranquil homophonic vocal periods in Kodály's personal modification of the sixteenth-century idiom and another vigorous quasi-pentatonic orchestral theme built on rising fourths, combined with reminiscences of the opening fanfare :



A sweetly lucid passage at "Venerandum tuum", making a representative "static" use of the augmented sixth, then leads into an *adagio* setting of the "Tu rex gloriae", the melodic material of which evolves out of the last vigorous passage on rising fourths. In this section the rhythmic flexibility, the exquisite interflow of the parts, the luminous delicacy of the orchestral harmonies underlying with their tranquil sevenths the growth of the independent voices, assume at once their most lucid and their most subtle form. The mould of the lines has here a pronounced pentatonic feeling and is obviously affiliated, both tonally and rhythmically, with folksong :

Adagio

Soprano Solo

pp

Orchestra (Skeleton)

From this "speaking" lyricism the polyphonic texture exquisitely grows until a powerful climax is built up by way of the orchestra's

characteristic insistence on the chord of the ninth. Except for a brief reference to the movement of the opening *allegro* this section is developed on a large scale over the dotted rhythm enunciated by the strings until it dissolves, at "Te ergo quaesumus", in a mysterious tremolo.

A fine swinging theme enters at "in gloria" and is soon inter-linked with an extension of the rising fourth theme. This merges at "per singulos dies" into a big recapitulation of the opening fanfare combined with a modification of the dotted rhythm of the *adagio*. "In te Domine" is an elaborate double fugue, the voices developing this superbly conceived vocal subject :



and the strings this equally string-like one :



The tonality—a very free transposed Lydian—and the rhythmic structure are again closer to the sixteenth century than to the principles of Handelian counterpoint, and a vigorous use is made of the rising fifth which seems to compensate the falling fourth which is so prominent at the beginning of the first fugue-subject.

Intermingled with the "in te Domine" themes, the subject of this first fugue reappears at "non confundar", and leads to a wonderful development of the words "in aeternam", based on the soaring fourths in increasingly concentrated stretto, an extremely poignant effect being achieved by the anguished suspensions on the top note of the phrase which then droops in pathetic chromaticism (note too the intensity of the chromatic alteration creating the augmented instead of the perfect fourth) :





The final climax is founded on an augmentation of the fourths motif and a recapitulation of the opening fanfare : there is a brief and exquisite coda with a typical chromatic intrusion in a harmony of diatonic concords.

What makes the 'Te Deum' so remarkable a composition is, I am inclined to think, its polyphonic texture which implies a clarification and in a sense a deepening of Kodály's emotional processes. In the largely homophonic 'Psalmus Hungaricus' Kodály seemed to have expressed consummately all that he had to say in his direct folk-founded technique, and it seemed to me unlikely that he could develop further along those lines. He would either have to stop composing, or to repeat himself, or to become relatively factitious, or to evolve a new manner. In view of the specialized nature of his musical upbringing the last of these alternatives seemed improbable, and many of the later choral works, not to mention the instrumental ones, did seem to betray a disturbingly synthetic quality. But in the 'Budavári Te Deum' Kodály, without sacrificing any of the spontaneity and passionate simplicity of his mode of experience, incarnates it in a polyphonic technique of surprising flexibility and power, and in so doing presents to us the essence of this experience with a lucidity and a depth that he had not, in the magnificently vital songs and the 'Psalmus Hungaricus', quite approached. The experience is not fundamentally more difficult or "profound", but its implications are more exhaustively realized. Its simplicity, more so even than the simplicity of the songs, is here its strength, and it is a serene smiling simplicity such as we shall look for in vain in almost all other contemporary music of anything approaching a comparable power. The earlier music of Vaughan Williams—to cite a local example that would appear to be broadly parallel—has none of Kodály's spontaneity because Vaughan Williams's achievement in an urbanized community inevitably betrayed a degree of self-consciousness that Kodály had less need of. Perhaps Kodály's significance in cultural history is more comparable with the position occupied in English literature by T. F. Powys ; in any case the accomplishment was a precarious one which once done cannot be repeated. What Busoni said of Tirso de

Molina's 'Don Juan Tenorio' might apply also to Kodály's 'Te Deum': "It is powerful, has great freshness and facility, is big, and at the same time naïve". And in a sense it would be apposite to continue the quotation and to add: "The creative artist will never reach this point again. The time for unaffectedness is past, and we reckon with too large a public that knows too much about a variety of things." Although Kodály may compose other music as good as the 'Te Deum', I doubt if he will write any better; and I am pretty certain that he will have no successors. Because of, rather than in spite of, his technical fluency in the 'Budavári Te Deum' he is, in the history of European music, the last great naïf.

THE MINUET-TRIO

BY ERIC BLOM

It may have escaped the notice of musicians who have not had their attention drawn to the fact—though once that has been done they will hardly deny it—that there is a curious similarity about the contrasts aimed at by more than one classical composer between the minuet and the trio of important instrumental works in sonata form. The impression is not to be escaped that the only dance of the older suite which was somehow salvaged when the *sonata da camera* merged into the solo sonata and the symphony, tries to make the most of two worlds. That the trio must as a matter of course provide a contrast to the main section of a minuet movement is obvious everywhere; but it is scarcely less plain that some classics aimed at a particular kind of contrast which recurs consistently enough to suggest the conscious or unconscious—far more likely unconscious—adherence to some tradition long taken for granted and now forgotten. Let us see whether we may be justified in suspecting such a tradition and, if so, where its foundation may be retraced.

For a rough description of the difference we so often find between classical minuets and their trios it will do to say that the former are urban and the latter countrified or, if we prefer, that the minuet seems to be aristocratic whereas the trio is rustic. It is so to the end of the eighteenth century, at any rate. After that, with the encroachment on aristocratic privileges by the middle classes, we find the courtly minuet losing its sway and changing into the scherzo in professional composition and into the waltz in popular music. But it is curious to find that in the scherzo of the nineteenth century and in what artificially survives of the minuet in professional music of that period the trio section very often remains rustic. Is the reason for this that the peasant class had suffered—or enjoyed, if one's sociological outlook tends that way—next to no change compared with the social upheaval among townspeople? It seems more than likely, since there is no reason to think that the trio maintained its older character by the composer's adherence to artistic precedents alone: for why, in that case, should not the minuet

have done so too? True, the whole argument falls to the ground if the assertion that the trio so often shows the character of rusticity both in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century can be denied. But can it?

To begin with, the trio takes its name, as we all know, from the early custom of entrusting it to three instruments. Bach calls his alternative second minuets by that name only when he actually does write in three parts, though not necessarily for three instruments, as in the clavier Overture in F major and in the third French Suite. Now in Bach's time minuet-trios often approximate their musical character to that of the *musette*, which is to the gavotte what the trio is to the minuet—an alternative section—and as its name suggests and its drones show, the *musette* presupposed the bagpipe as its bass instrument. The bagpipe is the most countrified of instruments, quite unpresentable at courts or in drawing-rooms, and it was best represented in professional music by oboes and bassoons, which classical practice as well as the nature of their sound has associated in our minds with trio music as the most congenial solo instruments because they are the descendants of characteristically open-air instruments. Bach, in the second minuet of the B \flat major Partita, uses a flattened seventh, the classical expedient for suggesting the characteristic seventh of the bagpipe, halfway between the major and the minor seventh.

All the same, the "rustic" alternative does not come conspicuously to the fore until the second half of the eighteenth century. We find hardly a trace of it in Rameau, who was only two years older than Bach and Handel, and neither the latter nor Purcell has any alternative minuets at all. Bach's pupil, J. L. Krebs, in a keyboard Partita, on the other hand, has not two minuets but three, the third being roughly a double-counterpoint interchange of the second; but there is no sign of contrast in mood, only in texture. Johann Schobert becomes more dynamic and dramatic, but still remains unaware that contrasts between whole sections as distinct from violent changes between phrase-groups are going to be irresistibly attractive to his immediate followers.

Attractive especially to Mozart, as we shall see in a moment. It is in his work that we find the most striking difference of ceremonious formality and something very like popularity between the minuets and their attendant trios. This is not unknown in Haydn, though such a bucolic trio as that in his G major Symphony, No. 88, with its augmented fourths and bassoon drone, is exceptional. No. 85, in B \flat major ('La Reine'), has a kind of peasant squareness in the trio, together with the ONE-two-three accompaniment the

waltz inherited from the *Ländler*; but this is unusually like one of the characteristic Mozartian trios that will be discussed at greater length presently. The trio in the 'Oxford' Symphony begins in a folkly manner, but gets away from it in the symphonically extended second part. The 'Surprise', 'Clock' and 'Military' Symphonies as well as No. 99, in E \flat major, and No. 104, in D major, are familiar examples showing no trace of rusticity in their trios. A *Ländler*-like tone is distinctly present, on the other hand, in the alternatives of the Op. 33 string Quartets, 'Gli scherzi', but they really are, as their nickname implies, early specimens of works containing the scherzo type of movement in place of minuets, and moreover there is no contrast of the kind we have in view between the main sections and the alternatives of these movements. In other Haydn quartets, too, both sections are sometimes countrified, but the composer's characteristic irregular phrase-grouping makes them metrically too subtle for anything more than a superficial feeling of folkiness to prevail. The sixth Quartet of Op. 64 for once shows a sharp contrast, but the trio might be Mozartian, in so far as it is not particularly Haydnish. The fourth work of the same opus has a trio with a yodelling theme that is distinctly unsophisticated, and it contains wide melodic skips of the kind Curt Sachs says are frequently found in the music of the Austrian *Ländler* of the older type (before 1800)⁽¹⁾. The trio in Op. 76, No. 1, comes near to the *Ländler* spirit in its theme, but its impish metrical extensions are purely personal, not folk-like in the least. In all Haydn's quartets, indeed, not only in Op. 33, where they do it avowedly, the minuets come near the scherzo manner and tend away from the folk-dance, even where they use material akin to it. In the piano Sonata in C \sharp minor the trio, in the tonic major, is *musette*-like and pastoral, but in those works again Haydn is as a rule fancifully himself: he does not consciously archaize or unconsciously follow tradition, nor does he mimic folkiness, as Mozart sometimes humorously does in his orchestral dances.

Only about a quarter of Haydn's piano sonatas contain any minuets at all, and his rondo-finales in *tempo di minuetto* do not concern us here; in Mozart's works of the same category only two have minuets. That of the E \flat major Sonata, K.282, is wholly courtly, but the A major, K.331, has a pastoral trio of an idealized kind, with gentlefolk who have read Rousseau but followed him only as

⁽¹⁾ Curt Sachs, 'World History of the Dance' (Allen & Unwin, London, 1938). Sachs, who rarely makes a point of musical interest, says these skips often covered as much as two octaves. Mozart, in the fourth of his *Deutsche*, K.536, has leaps widening progressively up to fourteenths. Others are found, for example, in K.586 (No. 8) and K.600 (No. 4). See also Schubert's A major piano Sonata of 1828 (two and three octaves).

far as their comfort would allow masquerading as shepherds. But elsewhere, in the greater and maturer Mozart, we are often struck by a sort of deliberate lapsing from the perfect manners of the minuet into a freer and easier tone, not as an affectation, though sometimes by way of delicious parody, but from sheer pleasure in artless simplicity—if artless does not mean devoid of art, as Mozart never is, even where he may become shallow.

Is it necessary to remind the reader of such trios? Merely to talk about them is to recall a dozen examples in Mozart's familiar works. The minuet in the 'Kleine Nachtmusik', K.525, is stately, almost severe with its bare two-part openings of each section; the trio, on the other hand, is a simple, square-cut hurdy-gurdy tune with the barest accompaniment and bass. That kind of primitive accompaniment, grinding out simple chord progressions in quaver arpeggios, is found in other trios of the rustic sort, including that of the great E \flat major Symphony, K.543, where the second clarinet gurgles out such figures while the lower strings thrum the ONE-two-three of the *Ländler* as though content with performing the meanest of services: and well they may be, for here in truth is humility exalted to the gates of Paradise. So, too, with the trio in the G minor Symphony, K.550, the glorified transfiguration of the Austrian country dance—a *Ländler* of the Elysian Fields. And perhaps the second trio in the clarinet Quintet is the Austrian mountaineers' dance, the *Schuhplattler*, etherealized and transported to the same heavenly regions, for what is it but a yodel with the barest waltzing accompaniment? There is an immeasurable difference, it is true, but it is a spiritual, not a material difference. The actual stuff of the music is that of common rusticity, as it is still in Bruckner and Mahler, where, however, commonness as such has come to be accounted a virtue. The 'Haffner', the 'Linz', the 'Jupiter' Symphonies, all have festive, pompous minuets fit for burgomasters, counts and Olympians, and all are followed by trios singing country airs and wearing the most modest adornments. The blithe milkmaid's song of the 'Haffner', with its churning accompaniment, is perhaps the most characteristic. But we meet similar things elsewhere. The string Quintets in D major, K.593, and E \flat major, K.614, both show exceptionally striking contrasts between their minuets and trios. The former are among Mozart's most sophisticated movements of the kind, and that of the D major is elaborately contrapuntal; both, again, have simple trios, that in K.593 being confined to wide arpeggios followed by plain cadences, that in K.614 having a barrel-organ tune in a waltzing motion, with the ancient hesitation between flat and sharp sevenths that recalls

modal folksong. Yet the supreme virtue of Mozart's discernment unified these movements: artfulness and artlessness are achieved with equal perfection.

Only two of the mature string quartets contain trios that are interesting from our present point of view. Some—*e.g.* the G major Quartet, K.387, with its long and more than usually symphonic minuet—show no trace of these deliberately sought contrasts, which it is just as well to mention here, since it would be utterly wrong to convey the impression that all Mozart's minuet-trios fall into the plebeian manner—shall we say?—in order to stand out from the surroundings of the aristocratic dance. But the D minor Quartet, K.421, is a conspicuous case in point, for its minuet in that key is in a tragic vein and very highly wrought, whereas the trio, in D major, has a very simple arpeggio theme over a thrumming accompaniment, with the wide skips and tonic-and-dominant yodels of a typical *Ländler*. The Quartet in E \flat major, K.428, is another, although the contrast is attenuated by the minuet's being itself a rather folkly strain. It seems, indeed, to be more so than the trio when the latter begins in C minor, for Austrian dances are rarely in minor keys even in the form cultivated by the classics; but the trio too willy-nilly slips into the folk-dance manner, and it is actually not in a minor key, but in B \flat major.

The serenades, cassations and divertimenti may also be searched with advantage for relevant examples. There are fairly good ones, to go no farther, in the D major Divertimento for oboe, strings and horns, K.351, and in the magnificent B \flat major wind Serenade, K.361, and we may find an excellent one in the trio of the second minuet in the E \flat major wind Serenade, K.375, a straightforward dance piece with regular metres. But it is the 'Haffner' Serenade, K.250, not otherwise an outstandingly attractive work, as Mozart goes, to which special attention must now be given for a moment. It happens to throw out a suggestion of the reason for this rusticity so often found in the trio section of a classical minuet, particularly in Mozart—a suggestion it is hoped this attempt at accumulating further scraps of evidence may strengthen into a valid argument; or if not that, may at any rate prove of some interest in itself.

The 'Haffner' Serenade contains three minuets, a fact that distinguishes the serenade type very sharply from the earlier species of the suite, which may in some isolated instances have contained as many movements of the kind, but only as alternatives set side by side, never scattered through the work and interspersed with other movements. The first minuet is almost like an early version of that in the great G minor Symphony of 1788, of which we also

find a later echo in the fourth of the *Deutsche*, K.600, where, so to speak, it comes down to earth. The 'Haffner' example is not only in the same key, but has similar poignant chromatic inflections in the main section and a pastoral simplicity, with a wind accompaniment reduced to the minimum, in the trio. What interests us more, however, is the difference between the second and third minuets in this work. The former, in D major, has a trio that is not in the least rustic, but was perhaps cast in D minor on purpose in order to keep up an attitude of aristocratic seriousness; and it is worth noting that Mozart went out of his way to call this a *Menuetto galante*, as though he wished to emphasize its courtly character, which is quite strikingly different from that of the third minuet, a very distinctly bucolic movement, not only in its trio, but as a whole. Did Mozart deliberately write his second minuet for the gentry who were present at the wedding of Burgomaster Haffner's daughter and reserve the third for the servants or for the country folk who may have been allowed to make merry on the fringe of the festivity at sociable, kindly Salzburg?

Let us come to the point which now insists on being made. It is only a step farther to the notion that Mozart very probably intended these minuets to be actually danced by the gentry and the country folk respectively. For he was not writing a concert work: he was writing a musical entertainment for a wedding. Is it likely that he, who always knew exactly how to fit music to its occasion as well as to its form, expected a crowd of lively wedding-guests to sit still listening to a work in eight movements taking up the time of two symphonies? No, a serenade for a wedding was evidently intended to be played piecemeal at intervals between refreshments and dances, and why should not the dances have taken toll of its music? Even if this is not what really happened at the Haffner wedding, we may be pretty sure that it was what originally determined the peculiar constitution of works of the serenade, cassation or divertimento type. Otherwise why three minuets in this case, when other dances might just as well have been borrowed from the older type of the suite for a purely musical entertainment? Well, other dances were no longer danced in the seventeen-seventies, while the minuet was fashionable. (Even in Bach's later years only the minuet and the *contredanse* were danced, the other dance forms in his suites being already archaic.)

Strictly speaking, it was one kind of minuet, a stately, ceremonious kind, that was fashionable, in the sense that it was the dance for people of fashion. But there was another kind of dance in triple time, similar in its leisurely motion, but different in character:

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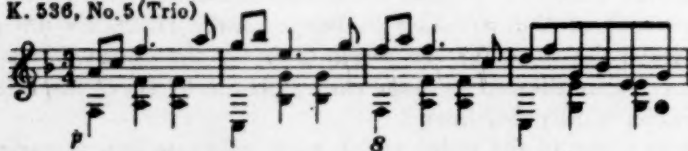
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a pastoral, rustic, bucolic kind. It was the *Ländler*, though that is its local Austrian name, more current in the nineteenth than in the eighteenth century. Collections of *Ländler*, from the time of Mozart to that of Schubert, were as often as not called *Deutsche Tänze*, or simply *Deutsche*, just as an artificialized Scottish dance became commonly known on the Continent not as *Danse écossaise*, but simply as *Écossaise*. *Ländler* and *Deutsche* are the same thing, a countrified sort of dance, as indeed the former name (literally "land ones") indicated. Being cultivated mainly in Austria and in the mountainous south German region of Bavaria, their rusticity often assumed the primitive melodic arpeggio forms of the yodel. Here is an example of the yodelling type of melody as it got into one of Mozart's set of *Deutsche*:

K. 536, No. 5 (Trio)



We have here also the thrumming accompaniment that afterwards became the very foundation of the waltz, which of course in its Viennese form is the direct descendant of the *Ländler* through Schubert, Lanner and the elder Johann Strauss. Even in Johann Strauss junior, in whose hands the "land dance" had become entirely urbanized, to the point of becoming the Austrian capital's monopoly, we occasionally find distinct echoes of this artless mountain-dweller's music, the classic instance being the 'Geschichten aus dem Wiener Wald' waltz, particularly its introduction.

If we look at the numerous separate sets of Mozart's orchestral minuets and *Deutsche*,⁽²⁾ leaving aside the sets of country dances, which are in 2-4 time, and therefore irrelevant to this study, we shall be struck by the difference of character between them. The minuets are decidedly stately, courtly, aristocratic; the *Deutsche* as decidedly easy-going, countrified, plebeian. And if we suspect

⁽²⁾ There are fifteen sets of minuets and ten of *Deutsche*, the last but one of which, K. 606 (1791), is called *Sechs ländlerische Tänze* and thus proves the similarity of the dances going under the two names of *Deutsche* and *Ländler* (which may be called *Ländlerische Tänze* just as *Deutsche* may be called *Deutsche Tänze*). The list of Mozart's orchestral dances in triple time is as follows, according to the third edition of Köchel's catalogue, edited by Alfred Einstein, whose new numbering, where it differs from Köchel's, is followed by the latter's original numbers in brackets:

Minuets: 61d (103), 61e (104), 61f (105), 61g, 61h, all 1769; 73t (122), 1770; 130a (164), 1772; 176, 1773; 363, 1780; 448a (461), 1784; 568, 1788; 585, 1789; 599, 601, 604, all 1791.

Deutsche: 509, 1787; 536, 567, both 1788; 571, 586, both 1789; 600, 602, 605, 606, 611, all 1791.

that the minuets in the 'Haffner' Serenade were actually danced, we know for a fact that these sets of separate orchestral dances were specially written for that very purpose, those dating from 1787 and after for the Austrian court. In December of that year, Gluck having died the previous month, Mozart was appointed to succeed him as chamber musician to the court of Joseph II, an honour that amounted to nothing more than an obligation to supply dance music for the court balls, held in the *Redoutensäle* during the Carnival. The emperor favoured these as an opportunity for bringing various classes of people together, and although he frequently appeared there in person with his retinue, anybody who could dress and behave decently was admitted, and enjoyed considerable liberty, as indeed did the upper classes, provided they were masked. Minuets and *Deutsche* were the chief dances, say Jahn-Abert,⁽³⁾ but only the lower orders took part in the latter, whereas the minuets were reserved for the gentry and the nobility, perhaps for the simple reason that by tradition they alone were ever taught the rather complicated figures of that dance. According to Sachs⁽⁴⁾ the minuet steps were made difficult by the complication of a kind of cross-rhythm between the three beats of the music and the left-right pairs of steps, thus :

Music	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
Dance	l. r. l.	r. l. r.	l. r. l.	r. l. r.

similar to a certain kind of Handelian cadence in triple time, which may be thus formulated :

$$3-4 + 3-4 = 2-4 + 2-4 + 2-4^{(5)}$$

It is quite clear, then, that these court occasions, for which Haydn, Eybler, Gyrowetz, Hummel and Beethoven also wrote, among others, made a strict class distinction, musically speaking, between the dancers and their dances, as socially they evidently did not while the freedom of the masquerade lasted among them; and Mozart made this distinction quite plain in his dance music. That he was perfectly well aware of what he was doing, and why he did it, is proved by the ballroom scene in the first finale of 'Don Giovanni'. Every musician knows that the company at Don Juan's house dances to three little orchestras and that Mozart

⁽³⁾ Hermann Abert, 'W. A. Mozart: neubearbeitete und erweiterte Ausgabe von Otto Jahn's Mozart', 2 vols. (Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig, 1924).

⁽⁴⁾ *Op. cit.*

⁽⁵⁾ See 'Handel's Two-length Bar', by H. H. Winterngill, 'Music & Letters', Vol. XVII, No. 1 (January 1936).

performs the incredible *tour de force* of making them play simultaneously the most famous of all minuets actually designed for dancing, a country dance in 2-4 time and a *Deutscher* in 3-8. Now the minuet is danced by Don Juan's noble guests, and it is played by his little domestic orchestra with a complement of instruments, as Jahn-Abert point out,⁽⁶⁾ such as a grandee may be expected to possess. The country dance and the German dance, on the other hand, are played by two little primitive village bands of violins and string basses, without violas, and they are danced, respectively, by Don Juan with Zerlina and by Leporello with Masetto, members of the lower orders joining in as the producer may appoint; but on no account must the nobles take part in these lowlier dances, the music of which is distinctly popular.

Popular, too, is Mozart's music of his *Deutsche* written for the Viennese court, whereas the orchestral minuets for his imperial patron, as well as those composed earlier, are courtly and ceremonial. Also, the village-band element is preserved in the former, no set of which includes violas in the score, while freak instruments hardly any of which are found elsewhere in Mozart are often introduced, such as the hurdy-gurdy (the French *vielle*, called *Leier* by Mozart), the timbrel, the side-drum, cymbals, the piccolo (in one case called *Pickelflöte*), the posthorn and a set of jingles tuned to play notes of actual pitch. The trio of the last of the three *Deutsche* K.605, entitled 'Die Schlittenfahrt', which is in the descriptive manner favoured a generation earlier by Mozart's father, ends with post-horns and jingles fading away in the distance, and the conclusion of K.571, one of the more organic sets held together by a coda in which all the instruments join after taking their separate turns in the preceding dances, is scored in an erratic manner not found in the well-conducted minuets:

K. 571 (Conclusion of Coda)



It is not only the orchestration, however, which shows Mozart's intention of differentiating *Deutsche* sharply from minuets by a sort of musical class-distinction: the difference extends very conspicuously to the material itself. Popular melodic forms, unusual in Mozart, who in spite of the stories about "Non più andrai" in

⁽⁶⁾ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 513. Don Juan here employs the little Mozartian Salzburg orchestra of oboes, horns and strings; in the supper scene in the second finale he sports a wind octet.

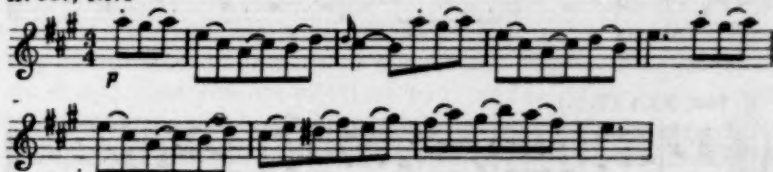
Prague is not the sort of composer whose tunes haunt streets and bathrooms, are surprisingly frequent in these dance sets. Here, for example, is a tune so unlike him that one might well suspect it to have been lifted from a folksong :

K. 567, No. 2 (Trio)



and its accompaniment is of a kind often found in his trios in sonata-form works, but not in any minuet one can readily think of. Neither are such tunes as the following imaginable as material for his minuets, though they look very much like the openings of any number of trios :

K. 567, No. 5



K. 586, No. 1



It will be asked whether in Mozart's sets of minuets there are no trios. There are ; but the curious fact is that they rarely, if ever, differ in style from the courtly manner of their main sections. What is more remarkable still, the *Deutsche*, which also have their trios, show the same consistency, the character of both sections being in this case distinctly popular or rustic. Most extraordinary of all, in the sonata-form works we again and again find minuet-and-trio movements the first section of which resembles in style both the main sections and the trios of the consistently aristocratic separate sets of

minuets, while the same is true of the trios in the sonata-form works and both sections of the *Deutsche*. Here is a specimen, in skeleton short score, of the first section and of the trio (same number) in one of the sets of *Deutsche*, which not only shows the unusual quality of Mozart's "plebeian" manner, but also the similarity of style between the two sections, which persists with a curious uniformity throughout all the sets of dances of this type :

K. 509, No. 4



K. 509, No. 4 (Trio)



Jahn-Abert lay stress on this difference of character between the two species.⁽⁷⁾ They say of the minuets that

they are more artful in texture and especially in their orchestration display all the charm of Mozart's orchestral treatment at that time ; many of them changing their instrumental garb at the repeats. The *Deutsche*, on the other hand, aim above all at preserving the popular tone, and they do so by considering its sentimental (especially in the minor-key trios) as well as its coarse aspects.

But this consistency of Mozart's separate dances in triple time once established, how do we account for the frequent glaring contrasts between his minuets and trios in his more important works ? And why do we not find the same thing to anything like the same

⁽⁷⁾ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 615. The older spelling of *Teutsche* is used by them.

extent in Haydn? As to that, the answer is surely that, whatever else one may prefer in Mozart, Haydn is a composer far less bound by tradition, far more ready to use accepted forms and devices wilfully in his own way. He may start a trio in a popular vein and then expand and develop its second part to a very much larger size, so that the treatment becomes symphonic. He was followed in that practice by Beethoven, who quite early in his career had not only taken Haydn's cue to cultivate the scherzo at the expense of the minuet,⁽⁴⁾ but made much of that expansion of the second part of the trio.⁽⁵⁾

Mozart, then, was bound by tradition, as indeed we know from his infallible way of always knowing exactly, from his boyhood onward, what was required of a composer brought up as he was in his handling of this, that and the other musical species. But if there was a tradition even at the bottom of his habit of frequently combining the aristocratic and popular elements of triple-time dances in his sonata-form works, elements he so strictly kept apart in his separate dances, what was that tradition? That, indeed, is the question now to be examined.

Two hints have already been thrown out. Mozart knew the custom of mixing different classes of society at the court balls, of giving them different dances to dance and of providing music for these dances that differed in character; and secondly he musically symbolized that custom with inimitable skill and humour in 'Don Giovanni', the idea of combining the dances contrapuntally being, of course, his own. Da Ponte could never have conceived it alone, for it is purely a musician's notion, and one, moreover, such as only a very great master could have dared to entertain, since it involved a technical problem of hair-raising difficulty.

However, Mozart had mixed aristocratic and popular music in the minuet movements of his instrumental works long before he knew anything of the Viennese court at first hand and long before the Don Juan subject came his way: the 'Haffner' Serenade, which dates from the second Salzburg period, is only one isolated instance of his early practice with that kind of thing. He was twenty when he wrote it, and the tradition had been in his blood long before that age. It was in fact a very old tradition—much older than he knew, no doubt. Let us trace it back.

⁽⁴⁾ The third movement of Beethoven's first Symphony, though still called a minuet, is an out-and-out scherzo.

⁽⁵⁾ In the second Symphony, where the eight-bar first section of the scherzo might have been the tune from one of Mozart's *Deutsche*, the second part, extended to thirty-six bars, could have been nothing else than a piece of Beethovenian symphonic writing.

According to the 'Encyclopædia Britannica'⁽¹⁰⁾

The earliest dances that bear any relation to the modern art are probably the *danses basses* and *danses hautes* of the 16th century. The *danse basse* was the dance of the court of Charles IX. and of good society, the steps being very grave and dignified, not to say solemn, and the accompaniment a psalm tune. The *danses hautes* or *baladines* had a skipping step, and were practised only by clowns and country people.⁽¹¹⁾

In England it was the country dance which performed a similar function of social equalization—so long as a festivity lasted. In the Elizabethan era it was on certain occasions danced by masters and servants together; and Playford, writing during the Commonwealth, when "these Times and the Nature of it [the dance] do not agree", shows the country dance introduced to good society on the charming title-page of his 'Dancing-Master'⁽¹²⁾ and in his preface recommends it to "young Gentlemen"⁽¹³⁾. Goethe says late in the eighteenth century that in Rome the minuet is ceremonious and that not everybody (indeed few people) can dance it, or can obtain permission to do so. The country dance, on the other hand, he describes as haphazard and danced by all and sundry.⁽¹⁴⁾ But from an earlier German writer, an expert, we learn that the country dance was refined by the English aristocracy, until it had become "both a pleasure to dance and lovely to look at", and was accepted almost everywhere.⁽¹⁵⁾

No such refinement came over dances of the *Ländler* and *Deutsche* type until they went to town to merge into the Viennese waltz, and that, of course, belonged as much to the middle classes as to the aristocracy. Until then the music of these countrified dances retained its rustic character even in the work of so civilized a composer as Mozart, and there is no doubt that it did so because its divergence from such a courtly dance as the minuet, to which it was otherwise closely linked by its binary form, its square metres

⁽¹⁰⁾ Art. 'Dance', 13th Edition, Vol. VII, p. 797.

⁽¹¹⁾ It is an unfortunate accident of terminology that the "low dance" should be that of the upper classes and the "high" that of the lower orders. The adjectives are due, of course, to the nature of the steps: the mincing *pas menus* (hence *menuet*) of the courtiers and gentry, and the strides and leaps of the servants and country folk.

⁽¹²⁾ John Playford, 'The English Dancing-Master' (1650). Modern Reprint edited by Leslie Bridgewater and Hugh Mellor. (Mellor, London, 1933).

⁽¹³⁾ The country dance too was cultivated by the classics, particularly by Mozart in his *Contredänze*, a designation derived from the French *contredanse*, which in turn was simply a phonetic perversion of the English "country dance", exactly as *redingote* is of "riding-coat", *boulingrin* of "bowling-green" and *molesquine* of "moleskin". Goethe ('Aus meinem Leben') writes of the "English *contre*". In the English catalogue of Breitkopf & Härtel's complete edition of Mozart the composer's title, instead of being simply turned back into its original, is translated as 'Contra-Dances'.

⁽¹⁴⁾ 'Italien: Zweiter Aufenthalt in Rom' (1788).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Gottfried Taubert, 'Der rechtschaffene Tanzmeister' (Leipzig, 1717).

and its triple measure, was founded on a long-standing tradition. The close association dates from a common origin in a much older dance, the *branle*. The minuet itself is not very old. The earliest mention of it Sachs can find⁽¹⁶⁾ was made in 1664, by G. du Manoir, who was "Roi des Joueurs d'Instruments et des Maitres à Danser en France". According to Grove it did not appear in English publications until the second half of the seventeenth century,⁽¹⁷⁾ and the 'Encyclopædia Britannica', in the article already quoted from, informs us that it came to Paris not much earlier, in 1650, when it "was first set to music by Lully", which of course means merely that this was its first introduction to music as a higher art or if we prefer it that way, that it was then first deemed worthy of becoming a vehicle for composition. The French clavecinists, from Chambonnières onward (1670), have it sometimes, and d'Anglebert has a 'Menuet de Poitou' (1689)—a title that will become interesting presently. Attaignant (c. 1530) has only *basses danses*, *branles*, *pavanes* and *gaillardes* in his collections, and there are no minuets in Praetorius's 'Terpsichore' (1612). On the other hand—and this is significant as pointing to the process of a more rustic species detaching itself from the minuet—that dance begins to take on a *Ländler*-like tone in the eight suites of Johann Caspar Fischer's 'Blumenbüchlein' of 1698.⁽¹⁸⁾

In the same year appeared Georg Muffat's 'Florilegium secundum', a collection of keyboard pieces in which the composer put together festive dances in the form of suites, the fourth of which, 'Splendidae nuptiae', depicts a wedding-feast at which cavaliers and their ladies are given courtly dances and maidens of Poitou countrified ones.

Poitou again! Why should Poitou have a special dance of its own? But it did have one. Authorities like Dufort⁽¹⁹⁾ and Czerwinski⁽²⁰⁾, apart from others already cited, make it clear that the minuet originated from a *branle* danced in that province, derived still farther back from the *courante*, which was a lively, running and anything but courtly dance, at first in duple time, unlike the form made familiar by classical suites. Indeed it is perhaps through its transformation into the *branle de Poitou* that it acquired its triple measure, which it handed on to the minuet. Arbeau, whose in-

(16) *Op. cit.*

(17) Art. 'Minuet', Vol. III, p. 472.

(18) Oscar Bie, 'Tanzmusik' ('Die Musik' series, edited by Richard Strauss) (Bard Marquardt, Berlin, 1905), p. 33.

(19) Giambattista Dufort, 'Trattato del ballo mobile' (Naples, 1728).

(20) Albert Czerwinski, 'Die Tänze des XVI. Jahrhunderts und die alte französische Tanzschule vor Einführung des Menuett' (Danzig, 1878).

valuable book on the dance, the 'Orchésographie' of 1588,⁽¹¹⁾ gives us so much information on the dances of the sixteenth century, and most fortunately quotes a great deal of their music, gives the first part of the tune of a *branle de Poitou* which many a reader would find to his surprise that he knows perfectly well, for it is the theme of the piece called 'Pieds-en-l'air' in Peter Warlock's 'Capriol' Suite, based on tunes from Arbeau. It is tender, leisurely in pace and minuet-like, though in a three-times-three motion, not the square arrangement of 3-4 bars the minuet as a dance acquired later but did not by any means impose on its higher musical forms, where metrical irregularity—in Haydn especially—is often its greatest fascination. Unfortunately Arbeau gives no other examples of the Poitou *branle*, and indeed not the whole of this one. "I will give you only the beginning of the air", he says, "because the rest of it, and all the other *branles*, of which there are a great number, have the same movement". All the other Poitou specimens, he obviously means, for the numerous other kinds of *branle* have not by any means the same movement. It was in fact "a kind of generic dance which was capable of an almost infinite amount of variety."⁽¹²⁾ Arbeau gives twenty-three varieties and, as we have just seen, tunes for each of them could have been found in profusion.

What interests us especially at the moment, however, is the fact that already in the sixteenth century different types of this forerunner of the minuet were danced by different people according to quite definite rules. Arbeau shows that four of the important varieties of the species were assigned to three different groups of people taking part in the dance: "The old people gravely dance the *branles doubles* and *branles simples*, the young married ones dance the *branles gais*, and the youngest of all dance the *branles de Bourgogne*." Sachs (*op. cit.*) gives similar information, evidently taken from Arbeau, though he does not reproduce it accurately: he assigns the *branle double* to the older people, the "more lively" *branle simple* to the younger married couples and the "rapid" *branle gay* (*sic*) to the youngest people. Of these the *branle gai* is in triple time; the double, simple and Burgundian types were in duple time, noted in four crotchets to the bar, *alla breve*, by Warlock, the pieces called 'Bransles' in whose 'Capriol' is a compound of the scraps of tune given by Arbeau for these three dances. Morley adds to the confusion by saying that

the vsuall *Almaine* containeth the time of eight, and most commonlie

⁽¹¹⁾ Thoinot Arbeau, 'Orchésographie: a Treatise in the Form of Dialogue, whereby all Manner of Persons may easily acquire and practise the Honourable Exercise of Dancing'. Now first translated from the Original Edition published at Langres, 1588, by Cyril W. Beaumont. With a Preface by Peter Warlock. (Beaumont, London, 1925).

⁽¹²⁾ 'Encyclopædia Britannica', article cited above.

in short notes. Like vnto this is the French *bransle* (which they cal *bransle simple*) which goeth somewhat rounder in time then this, otherwise the measure is all one. The *bransle de poictou* or *bransle double* is more quick in time (as being in a rounde Tripla) but the straine is longer, containing most vsually twelue whole strokes.⁽²²⁾

There is no evidence in these early authorities of any mixing of social classes similar to that encouraged at the Viennese court balls of the eighteenth century, if not in actual fact in the seventeenth-century Spain that is the usual setting for 'Don Giovanni'; but the sixteenth century was aware of the striking contrast between coarse peasant dancing and the decorous performances of good society. Sachs reproduces a serial engraving by Hakluyt's illustrator, Theodorus de Bry (1528-98), the pictorial representation and Latin text of which both prove this awareness; and there can be no doubt that these social divergencies were reflected in the music of the dances, if only at first by the instruments on which they were played: bagpipes, shawms, hurdy-gurdies and what not on the one hand, lutes, viols, oboes and flutes on the other, let us say. Rustic instrumental sounds, we have seen, are often a feature of the classical minuet-trio, even sometimes where the actual musical stuff does not suggest rusticity.

There is no doubt, then, that a mixture of styles in dance music was a feature of the ballroom from at least the sixteenth century onward, and although the affectation of introducing bucolic elements into it in professional composition may be no older than the "back to nature" movement advocated by Rousseau, the tendency to level out social differences at festivities at which dancing was the chief enjoyment must itself have had some influence on the music used for the dances assigned to different classes. We may safely take it that the tradition which led to the curious differentiation between the minuet and its trio in classical works of the sonata type dates a long way back, so far as dancing is concerned. The reason why it should ever have been introduced into absolute music is, of course, not easily discoverable, if at all; but it is quite readily imaginable, if imagination may be allowed—and why should it not?—to help us in such an investigation. A composer like Mozart, trained from infancy to cling to precedent by instinct as much as by reasoning, and accustomed all his life to apply his genius to artistic procedures sanctioned by usage, which he could nevertheless bend to his will as enterprisingly as anybody, but never thought of breaking, could not fail to hark back unconsciously to old habits the minuet had inherited from the *bransle* when he used the former

⁽²²⁾ Thomas Morley, 'A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke'. Modern Reprint, with an Introduction by Edmund H. Fellowes, published for the Shakespeare Association (Milford, London, 1937).

according to the accepted practice that had somehow or other handed it on from the older suite to the sonata form. A contrast was clearly wanted between the minuet and its trio; Mozart was just the man to obtain that contrast in much the same way as the customs of the ballroom had already done by at once opposing and reconciling different social classes and their dances to each other. While Haydn was more intent on expanding the minuet as a form, Mozart heightened what we may call its social significance. Not by any means always; but he did it often enough by placing aristocratic and popular music side by side to set us wondering. And to wonder is to seek for an explanation. Let us hope we have found it.

The trio, not only of the minuet but of its descendant, the scherzo, is so often more songful than the main section that here again we are urged to speculate. And again we more than suspect that old traditions are at the bottom of this phenomenon, for which sonata-form music in itself offers no explanation. Well, the nobles, always anxious to be in the fashion, more than probably hugged tradition far less closely than the people, and their dance, the fashionable minuet, far more readily followed newer trends. Instrumental music was more modern than vocal during the time the minuet as a dance for good society formed itself, and the newer dances, the minuet included, were never performed to song-tunes, as Peter Warlock in his preface to the English edition of *Arbeau* reminds us the older dances were "as often as not". Popular vocal music being much older than instrumental dance music, we should have no difficulty in understanding the strikingly vocal type of so many classical trios (often taking the form of a tune with a simple accompaniment), if we are ready to believe that they are a sort of unpremeditated survival of dances older than the minuet.

The fact, too, that the trio derives its name from pieces really played by three instruments, a practice still reflected in later music at times,⁽²⁴⁾ indicates an influence of songfulness, for early music written in three parts is almost sure to be in the nature of vocal counterpoint, even if written for instruments. Anything like a solo part, moreover, will there resemble a song, and it is more than probable that the frequent soloistic treatment of melody in classical trios comes from an old custom current when the *branle* was still danced by the nobility and the minuet as yet undeveloped as a special ceremonial function of their own. According to Sachs, "we know that in the French court dance (from Henry III to

⁽²⁴⁾ e.g. the minuets in Bach's third French Suite and in Haydn's string Quartet, Op. 9 No. 4, where it is given to the two violins alone, the first playing in double stopping.

Louis XIV⁽²⁵⁾ that form of the *branle* predominated in which after one or two rounds one couple left the chain, danced briefly together, and took up their position in the rear, . . . ". As one visualizes this, one can almost hear the trio of a classical minuet, but not the minuet itself, which one always thinks of not only as a ceremonial but also as a choric dance. And one thinks so because the classics have fixed that association in one's mind.

The aristocratic minuet received its death-blow from the French Revolution—or, to avoid the charge of being all too rashly wise about cause and effect after the event, let us say it came to an end as a fashionable pastime and grew into a quaint relic of the past at the time of the Revolution. Early in the nineteenth century a writer could deplore "la sévérité, avec laquelle on s'est accoutumé à juger le menuet depuis quelques années"⁽²⁶⁾. The *Ländler*, on the other hand, because it was anything but aristocratic, survived and changed comparatively little on merging into the urban and middle-class waltz. The early waltzes, up to and including the elder Johann Strauss, could be remarkably rustic, square-cut and jolting still. Diabelli's "waltz", which Beethoven with rude justice called a *Schusterfleck*, but on which he nevertheless wrote one of the grandest variation works in existence, was still very much of a *Ländler*, and with all his elegance the Viennese "waltz king", if never countrified, is at least often sentimental about the country. The quicker pace of the waltz is attributed by Sachs to the abandonment of hobnailed shoes and the introduction of the dancers to polished floors; but this seems far-fetched when we remember that the leisurely minuet had long before that been danced in palaces. What is much more likely is that the speeding-up of the *Ländler* into the waltz was a sort of parallel movement to that of the faster scherzo's growth out of the minuet; and it seems to have been dancing which once more influenced the masters who brought the scherzo to perfection, Beethoven and Schubert, just as it had influenced those for whom the minuet assumed the significance of a sonata-form movement, fit for symphony and chamber music at its greatest. Speaking more generally for a moment, we find the influence of the rustic dance as strong still in Beethoven and Schubert as it was in Haydn and Mozart. The *Alla danza tedesca* in the former's B♭ major Quartet, Op. 130, was no doubt so called by the composer when he had realized that the theme he had devised for it was that of a typical *Ländler*. The scherzo in the 'Pastoral' Symphony, the 'Peasants' Merry Gathering', is the ideal bucolic music without being as a matter of fact very much idealized: it is thoroughly folkly in

⁽²⁵⁾ Only the earliest years of Louis XIV's reign can be meant, of course.

⁽²⁶⁾ Moreau de Saint-Méry, 'De la Danse' (Paris, 1803).

character, though not Austrian so much as Flemish in its racily realistic, Teniers-like quality—an impression formed years before it was found to be confirmed by a Belgian authority.⁽²⁷⁾ In the eighth Symphony all is countrified or domesticated, and the trio is akin to folksong rather than folk-dance, the kind of song founded on the natural open notes of horn music so often cultivated by Germanic composers. And this is a real minuet-trio, not at all in the scherzo manner. This is rare in Beethoven (three minuets only in his piano sonatas, again not counting such a movement in *tempo di minuetto* as the first of Op. 54), and rarer still in the town-and-country, aristocratic-plebeian contrast between main section and trio, though there is a goodish example of it in the A major Quartet, Op. 18 No. 5, and a violent revulsion from courtliness to rebellion in the minuet of the B♭ major piano Sonata, Op. 22.

A closer follower of Mozart in this respect was Schubert, for all that scherzos predominate vastly over minuets in his work. In two chamber works that do contain the latter, the Octet and the A minor string Quartet, as well as in the piano Sonata in G major, Op. 78, which publishers would for long insist on issuing, for some unaccountable reason, as a set of four pieces including a 'Minuet', the trios are distinctly more "popular", more vocal and folksong-like, though with an urban, Viennese tinge, than the principal sections, while the trio in the great C major Symphony is a heavenly *Ländler* spun out to the proportions of an important composition, an exaltation of the common people's music into regions of eternal bliss. The scherzo-trios of at least five other of Schubert's piano sonatas are rustic in various ways, and though they differ from Mozart as one great creative individuality must needs differ from another, the ultimate influence is surely the same. The trio of the C major Sonata of 1815 yodels at the beginning; that of the A minor, Op. 42, is delicately but not too delicately pastoral; those of Op. 53, in D major, and Op. 122, in E♭ major, are strikingly *Ländler*-like; and that of Op. 147, in B major, suggests our most bucolic instrument—the bagpipe. And one need only compare these trios with Schubert's waltzes and *Ländler* to find that they have arisen from moods similar to those which engendered these separate dances. The relationship is, in fact, precisely the same as that between the minuets in Mozart's sonata-form works and his *Deutsche*, which greatly strengthen one's belief that ancient precedent accounts for the recurrent similarity of the contrasts between the classical masters' minuets and trios.

⁽²⁷⁾ Ernest Closson, 'L'Élément flamand dans Beethoven' (Monnom, Brussels, 1929). English Translation, 'The Fleming in Beethoven', by Muriel Fuller (Oxford University Press, 1936).

REGISTER OF BOOKS ON MUSIC

This list contains a selection of recent books on music. All prices are net, and in the case of foreign books the figure quoted is that at which the cheapest copy can be purchased in the country in which the book is published. Owing to war-time conditions the record of foreign books is necessarily very incomplete.

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C. B. O.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

On Learning Music, and Other Essays. By H. C. Colles. pp. 68. (Oxford University Press, 1940) 1s. 6d.

This pamphlet was written on the high seas, that is, away from books and apart from discussion, and is addressed to the musically minded friends the author left behind him in the antipodes, but through them to any who care to consider how the music of a country might be best fostered. As the question was not so much how to foster as how to start music in a new country, there is first a sober narrative of the way in which our two royal institutions began and pursued the friendly policy which made and kept them complementary instead of competitive; then, the proper place of that quality which is praised as "temperament" and condemned as "showmanship", the worth and the worthlessness of musical degrees, the sharp distinction between the collector's mania and a genuine broadening of the musical horizon, and the folly of unthinking prejudice; and last, a bit of common sense, that if you want a country to be musical you must get rid of jealousies and make life livable in it for the foreign artists.

Under these heads a good deal manages to get said that was worth saying, and it comes rippling out easily from a full mind. For Dr. Colles did not learn all his fluent allusions by editing 'Grove', but was asked to edit because he had thought about and cared for musical developments. He has an eye for the latent germ of goodness beneath an unpromising exterior and an art of driving a nail where it will go, as well as an equable mind that utterly refuses the *parti-pris*. He is a wise counsellor; and the question which this booklet does not raise, because that was not its business, but implies all through is—"Where is that council, that collection of Colleges—different ones, of course, in various walks of life—that we ought to have, to guide musical affairs as a whole; to consider the claims of youth and the needs of age; to watch the interests of choirs, orchestras, cathedrals, concert-giving, opera, libraries; to collect and administer a fund which should express the aspirations of well-wishers of music and be the repository of legacies; and to answer any questions a benevolent Government might be disposed to ask?" Any art requires some such stand-by, but music needs it more, because musicians are always being called upon, especially in this country, to act in concert, and because they find it most difficult to tear themselves from the pre-occupations of the inner ear to listen to what is going on in the world about them.

A. H. F. S.

Notes on Fugue for Beginners. pp. 47. (Privately Printed at the Cambridge University Press, 1941.)

Although no author's name appear on this pamphlet, it is a mere *secret de Polichinelle* that it was written by Edward J. Dent. The fact that

it comes from Cambridge would in itself have been a clue, and a less obvious, yet in a way more revealing one, is that in less than half a hundred small pages there are countless quick-witted and penetrating observations that could have come from no living English musical scholar's pen but Professor Dent's. Again, the language is at once so lucid and subtle that it could be ascribed to no foreign writer. One need thus not have felt particularly guilty of any indiscretion in disclosing the author's identity, even if Professor Dent had not declared, as he did, that there need be no secret about it. His only reasons for not affixing his name to the title-page, he says, were that he thinks the booklet not complete enough to be published as a treatise or handbook on fugue, and that he did not wish it to give an impression of being intended as an official professorial pronouncement as to what is required for University examinations at Cambridge.

We have here, in fact, exactly what the title suggests : a series of notes intended to be of use to students who for the first time approach the problems of fugue-writing. Not students, however, who approach everything else unprepared. A good deal of general musical knowledge is taken for granted, and indeed Professor Dent could not be so absorbingly interesting if he did not do so, nor could he have compressed his matter so admirably if he had thought it necessary to go on explaining his references at every turn. The reader who comes across this sentence, for instance : "Beethoven's fugues are numerous and the three huge fugues in B \flat represent him at the summit of his genius", is expected to know that the fugues referred to are the finale of the 'Hammerclavier' Sonata, Op. 106, the "Et vitam venturi saeculi" in the 'Missa solemnis' and the 'Grosse Fuge', Op. 133.

That the little book is entirely free from pedantry will be taken for granted. The Cambridge Professor of Music has never minded shocking those who took his office to be a stronghold of academicism sheltered from the rough winds of controversy and aloof from musical life as it is lived to-day, whether we like it or not. But he takes large views in every direction and is as little afraid of advocating strict rules where he thinks them useful as of advising his pupils to break them where they seem to him merely tyrannical. To find Ebenezer Prout's book on fugue commended as the best in English, "not very imaginative, but extremely broad-minded"—Prout having somehow become a by-word for an inflexible laying down of paper rules and regulations—is surprising, until one goes to one's bookshelves in search of the antiquated treatise and soon discovers the truth of Professor Dent's assertion.

Everything, in fact, is seen afresh, in the light most favourable to the present study, and the most unexpected things come in handy : even Tonic Sol-Fa, which is ingeniously used here and there in default of music type, and about which it is amusing and a little humiliating to be told by one whom one had thought so far above it that "If the reader cannot sing at sight from Tonic Sol-Fa, it is high time that he set to work to learn it, whatever his age and dignity may be".

Professor Dent sees and points out innumerable things it is useful and interesting to know, and when they seem very obviously true one feels the more mortified for never having thought of them oneself. Let us pick out a few, since that will make so much better reading than anything

one can write in the ordinary way of a review. On the very first page is one of those self-evident truths—but has it ever occurred to anyone else? "The chief reason for studying fugue nowadays is that it is the one type of music that has never gone out of fashion since it first came in."

Among the observations on the history of fugue we read (p. 10) that church music, even Palestrina's, always followed the lead of secular song, a useful reminder because the better preservation of sixteenth-century sacred music tends to give an impression to the contrary; and (p. 11) that in the seventeenth century fugal writing had become so much of a habit that even vocal arias often exposed a fugal subject, a single voice singing subject and answer in succession. Also (p. 12) that there were

two distinct types of fugue, existing indeed since about 1650 or earlier—the Catholic vocal fugue designed for the requirements of the liturgy, and the Protestant organ fugue free of all restrictions. Mozart must compress his vocal fugues as concisely as he can, because the archbishop is gouty and does not like standing; Bach's congregation will let him ramble away to eternity, because they may listen to him sitting down or can go out when they are bored.

Bored by Bach! It does not seem inconceivable to Professor Dent, whom one more than suspects of preferring Handel, and he therefore does not make any bones about saying so. "The '48'", he says moreover, risking a scowl from the reader, "are not good models for beginners". But he gives the best of reasons (though characteristically he does not include the glorious formal freedom of the '48' among them) in a paragraph one cannot resist quoting in its entirety:

They are almost all very difficult to play, and are conceived more for harpsichord or organ than for a modern pianoforte. The moment real pianoforte technique comes into consideration, the problem of fugue becomes immensely difficult and complicated. Stanford said that all pianoforte writing was fundamentally two-part: and this is more or less the case in Brahms's fugue at the of the Handel variations. This is also characteristic of D. Scarlatti's keyboard fugues. A really good pianoforte fugue is almost inevitably compelled to be a fake fugue, i.e. one that could not be put into score; and before a composer can write fake fugues properly he must certainly obtain mastery of the genuine fugue.

However, Professor Dent would doubtless rather have a fake fugue with some character than a "paper" fugue, correct to the last detail but devoid of feeling. Again and again he urges the student to practise fugal writing that is not only scholastically unexceptionable, but expresses something and keeps to the intended expression consistently, undeterred by technical temptations. Whatever wonderful devices of stretto, inversion, augmentation combined with diminution or what not a subject and counter-subject may lend themselves to, he will have none of all this if it wrenches a fugue out of the natural course it should pursue from beginning to end as a live piece of music. It is towards this aim—that music should always remain true to itself, whatever the mechanical obstacles it sets out to face or will glory in facing—that his wonderfully ingenious and stimulating teaching is ultimately directed. E. B.

Harmony, Counterpoint and Improvisation Book I. By B. J. Dale, Gordon Jacob and H. V. Anson. ('Musicianship for Students' Series, edited by George Dyson.) pp. 106. (Novello, London, 1941) 5s.

This is a composite production on somewhat unusual lines. Described as Book I (and presupposing the Aural Training preliminaries already

expounded in this series by Mr. Basil Allchin), it deals with foundations : later books will, we are told, reach more advanced stages.

A preface by Sir George Dyson explains the general design and purpose :

The first axiom that the modern student should adopt is that music is a single organic whole. . . . This textbook therefore offers Harmony, Counterpoint and Improvisation as one organic course of study. . . . As soon as the student of Part I can hear and handle a few basic chords, he should work simultaneously at the strict Counterpoint of Part II and the easier Improvisations of Part III. In this way his sense of chords, of parts and of musical invention, will grow together as an organic whole.

Mr. Benjamin Dale's forty pages on Harmony deal with common chords and their inversions, in four parts. His handling of the subject is normal enough, except that the numerous exercises are more than normally interesting : they are very varied and full of artistic points, with suggestive indications of tempo and phrasing. Opinions may differ here and there, perhaps. We may, for example, think that a discussion of passing six-fours might advantageously be accompanied by a commendation of the stronger first inversion in such passages (how much continuo-realization, especially Handelian, has been vitiated by six-four-threes in place of sixes !). On the other hand, Mr. Dale rather shies at one or two progressions in which I confess to seeing no harm ; and may not the sentence " it is customary to warn students against the mediant triad as the ' bad boy ' of the harmonic family " (even if, as it is, slightly qualified) have hampering results ? An additional chapter on the elements of writing in *three* parts would have been useful.

The first thing that catches the eye in Dr. Gordon Jacob's thirty pages on Strict Counterpoint is that every *canto fermo* is supplied with words, and every worked example with tempo and expression-indications as well. In his preface Sir George Dyson makes a special point of this never-to-be-relaxed emphasis on the *musical* quality of an initially vocal art : as Dr. Jacob says, " Strict Counterpoint is a simple and graduated method leading to the basic principles of the art of Palestrina ". Here again, we may possibly differ on details every now and then ; but, anyhow, the admirable exercises, especially those without semibreve *canti fermi*, are most welcome artistic. The final chapter deals with three-part Counterpoint ; otherwise Dr. Jacob confines himself to two-part work.

" Controlled Improvisation, whether mental or practical, is creative musicianship ", says the preface ; and Mr. Hugo Anson's contribution is of special value—if, as is intended, combined with the others. This Part III is designed entirely for use at the keyboard : all sorts of melodic and harmonic problems are dealt with in a well-ordered fashion. Some care perhaps is necessary lest the student should come to think a little too lightheartedly of composition in the real sense of the word.

The more advanced books that are promised will be awaited with interest.

E. W.

The Orchestra in the XVIIIth Century. By Adam Carse. pp. 176. (Heffer, Cambridge, 1940) 10s. 6d.

The ignorance of performers about the conditions under which eighteenth-century music was played would be incredible if there were

not a general conspiracy to treat technical expertness as the sole criterion of excellence. The most valuable and certainly the most interesting part of Mr. Carse's monograph is that dealing with interpretation. Here the essentials of eighteenth-century practice are set forth so clearly and with such sound common sense that only the most obstinate bigot would refuse to take notice of them. The essential points are, of course, the size of the orchestra employed and the relationship between upper part and bass on the one hand and inside harmony on the other. This section, where the work of Arnold Dolmetsch might have received some acknowledgment (his book does not even appear in the bibliography), is preceded by the evidence—not detailed in the sense that one can easily refer to chapter and verse for every statement but sufficiently thorough to inspire respect. Indeed, Mr. Carse is apt to be prodigal with information which is of little use to anyone. The names of defunct oboists and horn-players in lesser German courts are religiously catalogued, though no English reader is likely to want to know who they were or to show any interest in people who are names and nothing more. On the other hand the list of eighteenth-century orchestras, giving their constitution as precisely as is possible, will be useful, because nothing like it is available anywhere else. It is easy to turn up Quantz to see what a theorist advised in the matter of balance; but the only way to acquire Mr. Carse's statistics would be to undertake over again the labour which he has cheerfully shouldered. Anyone who has had any experience of acquiring statistics will be grateful to Mr. Carse for sparing him the trouble.

Among the good points made are that *clarino*-playing declined not because the art was in some mysterious manner lost but because composers, for reasons of taste, stopped writing passages of that kind; that orchestras were directed in the theatre from the keyboard, in the concert-room by the principal violinist; and that there is no reason why a modern small orchestra, if it practises hard enough, should not follow the eighteenth-century practice of dispensing with a conductor—which indeed, as the Busch ensemble has shown, is no obstacle to perfection. It is not quite correct to say of *gearbeitete Musik*: "Although in its day it was always given the support of keyboard-harmony, such support is not essential, and it is not missed when it is not provided." Bach's contrapuntal movements, for instance, are certainly not complete without a keyboard *continuo*. The fact that composers expected it inevitably creates gaps if it is not employed. Bach comes to mind, too, when one thinks of score-writing. No one will quarrel with Mr. Carse's generalization: "Every possible labour-saving and space-saving device was made use of. The framework of three or four parts *had* to be written, but no one troubled to write a part twice when a *col* [*sic*] *violini* or *col bassi* would save labour." But anyone who has seen one of Bach's scores knows that there are tremendous exceptions. Witness the 'St. Matthew Passion', where lavish duplications are written out in full with what seems gratuitous care.

There remains the question of style. Mr. Carse writes clearly, but he is not a master of the art of making a point succinctly. There are places where he labours his conclusions till the mind wearies of reiteration. Perhaps there is something to be said for this obstinacy. Unwilling readers have to be forced to take note of something they have hitherto

been content to ignore. But would not charm of manner and grace of expression add something to the power of argument ?

J. A. W.

Serge Diaghilev, his Life, his Work, his Legend : an Intimate Biography. By Serge Lifar. pp. 556. pl. 40. (Putnam, London, 1940) 21s.

The Diaghilev Ballet in London : a Personal Record. By Cyril W. Beaumont. pp. 355. (Putnam, London, 1940) 10s. 6d.

These two books will hardly interest musicians sufficiently to justify an extensive review in a specialist journal, but they deserve being recorded as useful chronicles including a good deal of information about the production of works in which more or less eminent composers of the early twentieth century had a great share—so great, indeed, as to make the ballet, for the first time, if not a major art in itself, at any rate the associate of valuable musical works that would not have come into existence without it. Neither would they have come into existence without Diaghilev's combined artistic discernment and genius for organization, and Diaghilev is well and worthily commemorated in these two books, which in many ways supplement each other usefully. Mr. Lifar's is less well written, but richer in incident ; Mr. Beaumont's, although too often a mere calendar of events, is agreeably enlivened with delightful sketches of people and of back-stage interiors, which make him float gracefully to earth after some all too ambitious flights of panegyric.

E. B.

Gustav Mahler, Erinnerungen und Briefe. By Alma Maria Werfel-Mahler. pp. 472. (Allert de Lange, Amsterdam, 1940)

Now that Madam Alma has given us her account of Madam Pauline all who have a weakness for the lighter side of musical biography must hope that Pauline will do her part by Alma. Here is a description by Mahler's widow of the behaviour of Richard Strauss's wife at the production at Vienna in 1902 of 'Feuersnot' :

Pauline Strauss [says Alma Mahler] sat in our box, and she raged the whole time. Such trash, she vowed, could be swallowed by no one ; we were perjuring ourselves, pretending to be pleased while really knowing just as well as she that there was not a single note but had been stolen, either from Wagner or someone else, even Schillings. . . . The performance over, Strauss, after innumerable acknowledgments of the applause, came to the box evidently cockahoop and said, "Well, Polly ["Pauksel"], what do you say of that for a success ?" It was no good. She turned on him like a wild cat : "Thief that you are, how dare you look me in the face ? I'm not coming with you—you're too base for me !" Mahler began to have enough of this, and he pushed the pair of them into his big workroom while we waited outside for the debate to end. A confused clamour could be heard ; and at length Mahler, out of temper with it all, knocked at the door, saying that we were going off to the restaurant. Then the door flew open and Strauss stumbled out, with Pauline screaming behind him, "You can be off ! I'm going back to the hotel. You can spend the evening by yourself". Strauss pleaded, "Mayn't I come with you ?" "Not unless you keep ten paces behind me !" She went, with Strauss following at a respectful distance.

Later, at supper, Strauss, who was evidently exhausted, said to Frau Alma, "My wife often cuts up rough (*ist oft arg ruppig*). But, do you know, it's what I need !" During the rest of the meal Strauss riled Mahler by talking of nothing but money, profits and royalties, and half in jest he stuck a pencil behind his ear like a commercial traveller. "The sad thing about it", whispered Franz Schalk, the conductor, to Frau Alma, "is that it isn't just a joke : it is really deadly earnest". And Alma's

comment is : " Always on the look-out for profit, Strauss has from the first been a speculator, an operative profiteer, an out-and-out materialist ; and time has only made him more so." Sympathy between the Strausses and Mahlers was, in fact, imperfect. Frau Alma has a memory of Strauss at the first performance of Mahler's third Symphony at Crefeld in 1902 :

After the first movement there was great acclamation, and Richard Strauss^s advanced to the platform, applauding so ostentatiously as to set the seal on the success of the movement. The audience seemed more and more impressed as the work went on, and at the end there was a veritable tumult, the people springing from their seats and enthusiastically pressing forward. But Strauss was more and more passive, and finally was not to be seen.

Pauline's temperament is again and again illustrated in Alma's lively pages. One day, when the Strausses were to give a joint concert, Pauline refused to leave her bed. Alma was in the room when Strauss burst in, a jewellery case in his hand. " Here is your ring, Polly ", he said. " Now get up ! " Pauline was out of bed at once ; and the concert went off smoothly. But it was an expensive success for the composer : the ring was set with a big diamond. The incident struck Frau Alma all the more since Mahler was never a man to think of giving his wife gewgaws. She writes :

He had no inkling of the kind of thing that pleases a young woman. When we were betrothed he said, " Other people are so tasteless as to give each other rings ; but you, I suppose, care as little as I for all that ? " I agreed at once that it was a fatuous custom. It never occurred to Mahler, when we married, that a bride usually gets a wedding present ; and no one called his attention to it. What I got were children, and there was no further question of gewgaws.

If in the Strausses' domestic duo the wife performed all the showy passages the composer was not above exhibiting temperament of his own in the outer world. Frau Alma has an anecdote about the Strassburg Festival of 1905, at which the ' Symphonia Domestica ' came at the end of a programme which had included Mahler's fifth and Brahms's ' Alto Rhapsody '. Mahler had carefully rehearsed his work ; Strauss had failed to do as much, and his apprehensions led him to lose his temper when the last movement of the Rhapsody was encored. He went so far as loudly to call the soloist of the Rhapsody a cow, unfit for appearance at a serious concert ; and the soloist's husband heard him. The scene that followed was not calculated to improve the chances of a good performance for the ' Symphonia Domestica '. Alma says it was chaotic ; and Strauss came back to the artists' room foaming at the mouth. When he had calmed down he said, " What I must do is write about it to my wife, who has no idea I have it in me to be so naughty. You, too, tell her about it all, so that she gets really upset ! "

In the letters which are contained in the second and less vivacious half of this book Mahler's attitude towards Strauss is shown as somewhat variable. He disliked Strauss's incessant talk of fees and profits, and says that Strauss spreads about him " a withering atmosphere ". But he was bowled over by ' Salome ' at Berlin in 1907 ; and at another time he is recorded as saying : " Strauss and I are tunnelling into a mountain from opposite sides, and one of these days we shall meet ". This did not in fact happen. The two men never agreed. If one came to adopt the other's opinion the latter had by then abandoned it. Frau Alma illustrates this by a memory of Strauss's criticism of the singing at the Vienna

Opera in the heyday of Mahler's rule. "You make a mistake", said Strauss, "in rating singing so much below acting at the Opera. You have a Demut and a Kurz, and you rave about a Mildenburg or a Schoder". And Strauss grimaced at these "vocally barbarous 'singing actors', the foes of *il bel canto*". Mahler and his circle, says Alma, were at the time all for intellectual singing and the Wagner tradition; "we despised *il bel canto*". What happened later on was that at New York Mahler submitted more and more to the charm of euphonious Italian singing, while Strauss wrote operatic roles for German singing actors. Mildenburg was his Clytemnestra, Schoder his Electra. "He had acquired the taste which Mahler had renounced".

Wolf is another of the composers whom Frau Alma, in her gossiping way, provides with biographical footnotes. Mahler in his student days had shared lodgings with Wolf and another musician, Krzyzanowski. It was *la vie de Bohème* at Vienna. When one of the three was composing at night the others had to roam the streets. A breach between Mahler and Wolf was caused by a project for an opera. Wolf had the idea of a fairy-tale opera, and the two friends discussed subjects. The tale of Růbezahel recommended itself—to Mahler so strongly that he himself began writing the libretto that night and completed it in twenty-four hours. But Wolf too had begun work on it and was mortally offended at Mahler's butting in. He gave up the project and never forgave Mahler. Years later there was a painful scene at the Vienna Opera when Mahler refused Wolf's demand for a production of 'Der Corregidor', a work in which Mahler could see but too many shortcomings. Frau Alma who, as a child, knew Wolf, was not attracted to him; she speaks of his "skurriles Wesen". On the same page (82) she gives particulars of Wolf's contraction of the disease which was to undermine him:

Hugo Wolf war als blutjunger Mensch von Adalbert Goldschmidt in die sogenannte "Lehmgrube" (ein Bordell) geschleppt worden, wo Goldschmidt zum Tanz aufspielte und dafür jedesmal ein Dämchen kostenlos erhielt. Er dedizierte einmal sein Honorar seinem Freunde Wolf, und Wolf trug "die Wunde davon, die nie sich schliessen will".

There are the inevitable stories about Bruckner. The mother of one of his pupils called one hot summer afternoon, to be received by the composer stark naked: he had happened to be in the bath when the bell rang. The lady fled with a shriek, much to Bruckner's surprise. "What can be the matter with the woman?" He himself had not noticed his lack of clothes. Frau Alma has from Siegfried Ochs another Bruckner story. Invited to a party, the composer telephoned in the afternoon of the day that he must bring with him his betrothed or not come at all. No one had a notion that Bruckner was renouncing bachelorhood; and Ochs, smelling a rat, hastened to the hotel. There he found a distraught Bruckner. The chambermaid had come into his room the previous evening; and in the morning, weeping and screaming, had declared he had taken her honour and must marry her. Bruckner had promised no less and was now engaged. Ochs now summoned the girl and asked her point-blank to specify the indemnity. This was a considerable sum; but Bruckner, gushing gratitude, was all for kissing the reluctant Ochs's hand.

Frau Alma leaves us rather in the dark about Mahler's relations with Pfitzner. In the letters there is a disparaging remark ("Great evocative

power and very interesting in colour ; but too formless and vague ") ; however, the book also contains some letters from Pfitzner to Mahler, expressing gratitude as well as veneration. In Finland in 1907 Mahler came across Sibelius, whom he liked personally though finding nothing in his music but pretty-pretty with a local flavouring. But then he could not find very much in Brahms. In 1904 he had been going through the whole of Brahms ; and in a letter to his wife he wrote of Brahms as " a mannikin with a narrow chest ". The themes he found often beautiful, but the developments factitious. Only Beethoven and Wagner really knew what to do with a good idea ! Then, a few days later, he has a phrase to tick off both Brahms and Bruckner : Brahms's music is like food that has been too long in the oven and Bruckner's has still to be cooked.

Mahler was more respectful towards the younger generation. A Vienna audience was once attempting to howl down a performance of Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony ; Mahler angrily rose in his place and demanded an end of the disturbance so authoritatively that he got it. On the way home he said : " I don't understand Schoenberg's music, but he is young and perhaps he is right. I am old and perhaps haven't the right ear for his music ". Frau Alma tells us that during her husband's last illness one of his preoccupations was Schoenberg's future. He would say : " When I am gone he will have no one left ". After his death Mahler's friends subscribed a considerable sum of money, the interest on which Frau Alma was to allot to deserving musicians. Schoenberg received this more than once ; but the capital sum later on went west with the inflation of the Austrian currency. Towards the end of this volume there are printed some letters addressed by Schoenberg to Mahler ; they are couched in the humblest terms. In one of them (August 2nd 1910) he appeals for an immediate loan of 400 florins, being penniless and with pressing obligations. The sum was telegraphed to him the next day.

The letters of Mahler's New York period include one to Andreas Dippel, of the Metropolitan Opera House, contesting Toscanini's claim to conduct 'Tristan'. The previous season (1907-8) Mahler had conducted the work there with eminent effect ; but now Toscanini insisted upon taking charge of it as a condition of his engagement. In the memoir Frau Alma has something to tell us about this incident. Mahler had to give in, for the Italian had the support of his compatriot Gatti-Casazza, now all-powerful. So far from paying Mahler any courteous acknowledgment Toscanini, says Frau Alma, abused him odiously to the orchestra. The Mahlers went to the first performance, which did not recommend itself to them. " Since those days ", says our author, " Toscanini has very much calmed down ". It would appear that eminent conductors find it hard to bear with one another. Mahler once imposed this humiliation on Franz Schalk at Vienna : having to confide a performance of 'Lohengrin' to his assistant, he sat on the stage at the rehearsal, facing Schalk and dictating to him tempi and shades. The result naturally was that on the night Schalk performed according to his own ideas and Mahler had one enemy the more. The general rule that in the opinion of a celebrated conductor the world is not wide enough to hold another finds its exception in the relations between Mahler and

Mengelberg, always most harmonious. Thanks to Mengelberg, Holland fell for Mahler's symphonies—the only country outside German-speaking lands to do so.

Entertaining though it is, Mahler can only be imagined as deprecating his widow's memoir, for her humour and her felinity corresponded to nothing in his nature, so fiercely single-hearted. It says a good deal for the resilience of her character that, after years of married life with this demonic man, she does not fear to gossip about him in a way which a nervous woman would expect to bring retribution upon her from his glowering ghost. What says a good deal for Mahler is that he is not damaged by his widow's lack of reticence. Frau Alma sets out to depict not an ideal Mahler but the man she knew; and the impression remains of a man of genius, in many ways the superior of most of his contemporaries. There could be no really happy life for a man of this temperament; the only wonder is that he was not a more unhappy man. For this he would seem in good part to have to thank his wife; and the ghost should remember this if Alma's book—unobtainable to-day in the mortal world but presumably accessible to the immortals—causes it to glower. She was a captivating young girl, he considerably older, when they met, and Mahler in his masterful way decided at once that she must be his. He won her—and Alma does not conceal that she was truly won—by the exertion of a kind of intellectual will-power. He was no practised lover; he even feared lest his conquest might be incomplete. All the same, he at once acted the despot. Alma was a trained musician, a composition pupil of Zemlinsky's. Before their marriage he forbade her to continue these studies: she must drop her song-writing, and she did. Her musicianship was henceforth to be confined to making fair copies of his scores. She had, to begin with, not cared much for his music. He won her by his spirit. She says:

His face when he was conducting took on a divinely beautiful expression. He always, then, lifted his head high; and with open mouth his face was so incomparable that I felt the thrilling certainty that it was my mission to free his path from ill and live for him alone.

There were some fairly trying times ahead. One or two passages in the book suggest that the contract may at moments have been too much for the young woman. But Mahler's letters to her are from first to last love-letters. Oh, very German love-letters! Alma is his mistress, his housekeeper, his secretary and also—the tone suggests—somehow his child. He abounds in tendresses; he pats her on the back when she has taken up a serious book; he tells her how great and deep Goethe is. The letters support the effect made by Mahler's music as, for the westerner, that of the German composer *par excellence* of his time. If there were only the evidence of the scores to go upon, Strauss would surely be taboo to-day in central Europe as the unmistakable Jew and Mahler exalted as the ideal Teutonic voice. Yet here is a recorded saying (not in the letters):

I am thrice homeless—as a Bohemian among Austrians, an Austrian among Germans, and everywhere in the world a Jew. An intruder everywhere, and nowhere welcome or wished for!

How little he felt himself to belong to the Jewish community comes out more than once in these letters. From Austrian Poland he writes to his wife describing the Jews at Lwow:

Nothing is so droll as the Polish Jews who roam about here as dogs do in other places. It is extraordinarily entertaining to watch them. Heavens above, what relations I have got! No words can say how idiotic racial theories seem to me in the light of such phenomena.

Even in those palmy days his Jewish origin was a handicap; and Frau Alma says that Cosima Wagner did her best to make his position at Vienna untenable because of this. (Cosima nevertheless wrote to him, when he was installed, an obsequious letter—here published—to recommend one of Siegfried Wagner's operas.) While his Christian baptism, at Hamburg, helped to pave his way to Vienna—was indeed indispensable to get him there—he was sincerely attracted to Catholicism. Frau Alma's testimony on this score is good enough. "He was a believer in Christ," she says. "He was a Jewish Christian, and took it seriously. I was a Christian pagan, and took it lightly."

Less than might have been expected is told us about Mahler's break with Vienna. At the root of the matter, no doubt, is this: that in his fanatical way, and cutting short his life in so doing, he aimed at a kind of perpetual festival at a repertory opera-house. He would not, in fact, learn the lesson Wagner had taught a full generation before. An all-the-year-round Bayreuth and more, at Vienna: he seems fanatically to have believed his genius could achieve this; but it could not be done. And the attempt half killed him. Yet he was given a very fair amount of rope. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand once sent to him a singer for audition with a letter of warm recommendation. Mahler tore up the letter and said to the young woman (Mizzi Günther), "Now let me hear you!" Again, the Emperor who had enjoyed a little amour with another singer (E. B.-F.) desired her to be re-engaged at the Opera, though her voice had gone. Mahler refused to admit her. Representations were made to him that an imperial promise was in question, and that the lady's remuneration would be paid from the monarch's privy purse. Mahler's answer was that in that case she might appear, only with the stipulation that the programme should announce, "By the Most High Command of his Majesty the Emperor". After that he was left in peace. And to the credit of the old regime, adds Frau Alma, be it said that Mahler benefited rather than lost by such audacity. When Mahler left the Opera he was entitled to a pension of 5,500 florins. He asked for 7,000. The Court allowed him 14,000, together with other concessions. Frau Alma admits that he had been high-handed; for example, in engaging himself to perform abroad at seasons when he was contractually obliged to be at Vienna.

Little that is very precise is said here about Mahler's conducting, but we are given a few of his sayings:

A tempo is right when everything in the score is given a chance to sound.

The tempo is too quick if any single figure is lost in a blur of sound.

In a *presto* the extreme limit of distinctness represents the right tempo. Beyond that the effect is lost.

And he also said that if an *adagio* seemed to miss its effect with the public he slowed down the tempo instead of quickening it, as is commonly done. Frau Alma gives an instance of Mahler's musicianship, quoted from his young years. He applied for the post of conductor at the Cassel Opera. On arrival he was asked whether he would undertake that night

a performance of 'Martha' without rehearsal. He knew not one note of the work, but agreed. That afternoon he spent with the score, and conducted it at night by heart—to such effect that on the strength of it he was given the appointment. In these pages we read incidentally about the composition and performance of Mahler's symphonies. The fourth, when first introduced at Amsterdam, was played twice in the evening, conducted first by Mahler, then by Mengelberg. During the second performance the composer said that he felt as though he himself had been in charge. At a rehearsal of the fifth Frau Alma, who herself had copied out the score, was horrified by the predominance of the percussion, particularly the side-drum. She went home weeping with chagrin, and lamented to her husband, "You have written a symphony for percussion!" He laughed, picked up the score and with a red pencil cut out nearly all the side-drum part and half that of the rest of the percussion. Many a concert-goer who has listened with discomfort to Mahler's 'Kinder-totenlieder' will sympathize with Frau Alma's strictures on that work (p. 89). She understands that the verses should have been wrung from Rückert, bereaved as he was; but not that anyone could set them to music just for fun. But that this composition represents a radical flaw in Mahler's artistic judgment she stops short of recognizing.

This fault in his taste is not, however, the only or the chief thing accounting for Mahler's frustration. What that was is the question which Mahlerian literature always leaves one wondering over; and it arises afresh after a reading of this book, a book that, however slapdash, does fairly contribute testimony to the genius of the man. He was remarkable, he was singular; and to add to his wonderful musicianship and his passionate intensity of mind he had the creator's impulse and ambition. Why then, the question is, do those bushels of his composition but suggest without truly realizing the glorious chapter of music which he seemed destined to write? We all know that those who fell under the spell of the man's marvellous personality maintain that the chapter was indeed written; but the rest of the world sees them under an illusion. The rest of the world can perceive the magnificence of the idea of the Mahlerian symphony but, in the upshot, all its beauties notwithstanding, not a fulfilment, only an adumbration, a grand idea all too imperfectly incarnate. One possible view is that, infatuated by Wagner's example, Mahler was from first to last misled in undertaking gigantic enterprises of his own conception; that his true genius, which he obstinately crossed and diverted, was for the compact composition. The argument gets support from the shorter movements, so admirably achieved, of 'Das Lied von der Erde'.

One may, however, feel reluctant to give up the notion of the possibility of a truly realized Mahlerian symphony; and the question then may be put to Mahler's shade, as to Busoni's, What might not have been done against frustration's threat if—on the precedent of Beethoven who, after all, Beethoven though he was or because he was Beethoven, did not see himself doing the fair thing by his genius by merely allotting to it the summer holidays—what might not have been done if, with frank and full sacrifice, composition had been recognized by you as a full-time job? Autumn, winter and spring we see Mahler sweating at the presentation of other men's music, just as Busoni meanwhile was colporting Beethoven's

sonatas and Liszt's fantasias up and down Europe. Come the summer holidays, and the two celebrated executants, with the applause of the multitudes still ringing in their excited ears and their minds necessarily saturated still with the music of all kinds of schools, sit down to the fearful task of making palpable and concrete their souls' burden and poetic dream. "Fiercely single-hearted" we have called Mahler, and so he was towards music in general; but the Muses are jealous among themselves, and the one he appealed to in the summer holidays to inspire his symphonies could not pardon him for giving most of the months of the year to the glorification of a secondary sister.

R. C.

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To the Editor, 'Music & Letters'

Sir,

In the list of Thomas Hardy music, as published in your issue for October 1940 (p. 400), a number of items in the Colby College collection were stated to be in photostatic form. I unfortunately neglected to add that the originals, from which these photostats were made, are in the possession of Miss Elna Sherman, of Lincoln, Rhode Island, U.S.A. It was by her kind permission that Colby College acquired these copies.

Faithfully yours,

CARL J. WEBER.

Colby College,
Waterville, Maine, U.S.A.,
December 18th 1940.

To the Editor, 'Music & Letters'

Sir,

"Ye friends, not these sounds . . . !", Mozart and Haydn would surely have exclaimed in Beethoven's words had they heard the noises that go forth into the world from the Obersalzberg near Berchtesgaden. Not but what they would have been horrified earlier if they could have seen the tasteless souvenirs sold to visitors on the shores of the Königssee. Favoured especially by Berliners and Leipzigers, these show a sorry decline of a craft that flourished at Berchtesgaden in the eighteenth century, the craft of wood-carving which made a speciality of toys and musical instruments for children.

It is not generally known that Haydn's "Toy Symphony", a divertimento that came to be favoured by serious musicians as a light entertainment, bore in its own time the name of "Berchtesgaden Symphony". We find it thus designated, for instance, on the occasion of a performance at the Freihaus Theatre in Vienna, the house where Mozart's 'Magic Flute' was first produced, given there the very same year—1791; and Hofmeister's edition of the "Toy Symphony" (c. 1815, probably the first edition) contains a story by way of a preface, according to which Haydn had distributed Berchtesgaden instruments among children at a fair and written this divertimento for them, and that at Berchtesgaden itself, though he never visited that place to our knowledge.

Even less familiar is the fact that several musical jests of this kind, containing parts for the "cuckoo", the "quail", the "rattle" and so on, were written at the end of the eighteenth century; and least of all has it been realized that Mozart mentions this kind of thing as early as 1770, at the age of fourteen, in a letter that has never been properly understood.

Mozart wrote from Italy to his sister on October 6th 1770: "Ich wünsche, dass ich bald könnte die Pertelzkammersinfonien hören, und etwa ein trompetterl oder pfeifferl darzu blasen".⁽¹⁾ Leopold Schiedermair, the German editor of Mozart's collected letters,⁽²⁾ thought that the curious word must have some sort of connection with the maiden name of Wolfgang's mother, Pertl, and the editor of the augmented and improved complete edition of the letters in English, Emily Anderson, shares this view. But in the corrupted reprint of this letter in the first biography of Mozart by G. N. Nissen, Constanze Mozart's second husband, there was already a reference to the true meaning of the term, which was a place-name handed down by tradition in various forms and evidently more than usually distorted by Mozart. Nissen, probably guided by Constanze's advice, here as elsewhere, simply substituted Berchtesgaden for "Pertelzkammer". Schiedermair, however, observed on this point that, if Nissen had been right, Mozart might possibly have had in mind symphonies by Salzburg musicians like Michael Haydn or Leopold Mozart; but although until 1938 Salzburg and Berchtesgaden were divided only by a frontier running through the Salzkammergut, it would be hard to understand why music written at the archiepiscopal court should have been named after a small market-town, and quite incomprehensible how Mozart could have wished to take part in a symphony by his father or by Haydn's brother on a toy trumpet or pipe.

The fact is that Mozart's term does not indicate a group of composers but a type of composition: those very divertimenti for string and toy instruments in which he desired to play, and the finest of which was to be written by Haydn.

It may happen that one day Haydn's "Toy Symphony" will be played as a kind of "Farewell Symphony" at Berchtesgaden. If so, who would not wish to hear the "Berchtesgaden Symphony" on the spot, and perhaps to blow his own little trumpet or pipe in it?

O. E. DEUTSCH.

Cambridge,

February 6th 1941.

⁽¹⁾ "I hope that I shall hear soon those Pertl chamber symphonies and perhaps blow a little trumpet or play on a little pipe by way of accompaniment." Emily Anderson's translation in 'Letters of Mozart and his Family', Vol. I. p. 242.

⁽²⁾ pp. 25 and 296.

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Vol. XXVII. No. 1. CONTENTS: JANUARY 1941

RAVEL'S LETTERS TO CALVOCORESSI, WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS
M. D. CALVOCORESSI (*London*)

STRAVINSKY'S SYMPHONY IN C (1940), A SHORT ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY
SOL BABITZ (*Los Angeles*)

SONATA FORM AND THE CABBALA
ARTHUR FARWELL (*New York*)

RICHARD DEERING'S FANCIES FOR VIOLS
CHARLES W. HUGHES (*White Plains, N.Y.*)

THE CASE FOR HOT JAZZ
LOUIS HARAP (*New York*)

THE MYSTERY OF THE BABYLONIAN NOTATION
CURT SACHS (*New York*)

FOREIGN MUSICIANS IN STUART ENGLAND
J. A. WESTRUP (*London*)

DR. BURNEY'S CHAMPIONSHIP OF HAYDN
ROSEMARY S. M. HUGHES (*London*)

PLANTATION MEISTERSINGER
JOHN W. WORK (*Nashville, Tenn.*)

'MUSIC IN THE MIDDLE AGES': A REVIEW
ALFRED EINSTEIN (*Northampton, Mass.*)

BOOK-LIST

RECORD-LIST

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